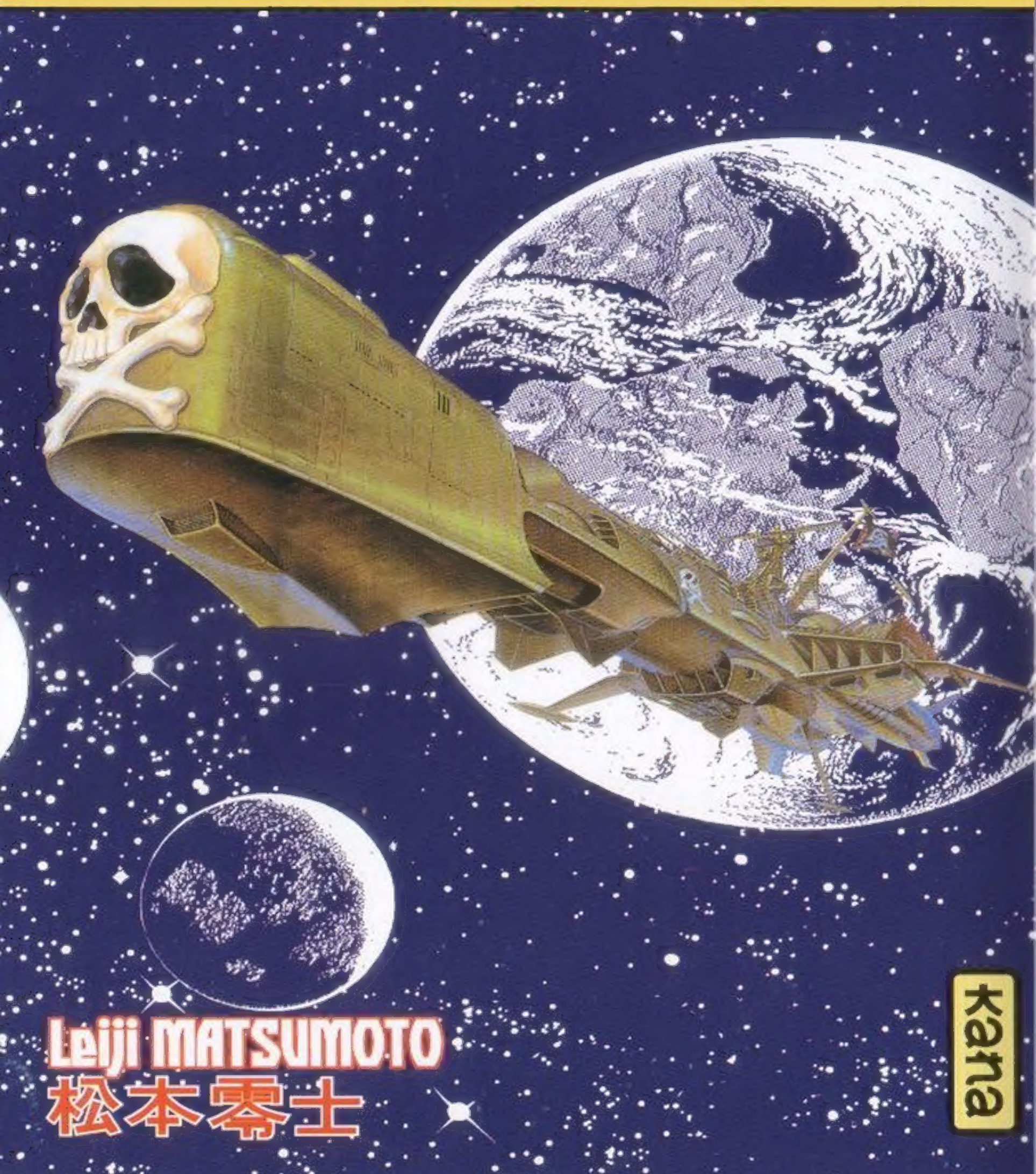
CREATED BY LEIJI MATSUMOTO
BASED ON THE OPERA CYCLE BY RICHARD WAGNER

Der Ring des Nibelungen

GÖTTERDAMMERUNG



Leiji MATSUMOTO
松本零士

kana

DER RING DES NIBELUNGEN IV

GREAT HARLOCK

GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG

Leiji Matsumoto

A manga series originally
inspired by
Der Ring Des Nibelungen,
an opera in four parts
composed by Richard Wagner
(1813 – 1883)

Volumes 1 – 8
translated and adapted
by Richard E. Mandel
from the French language version
released by Kana Press

Volumes 9 – 10
re-edited and adapted
by Richard E. Mandel
from the original English release
on the old Shinchosa web site
(www.shinchosa.co.jp)

Introduction by Richard Mandel

To my knowledge, this is the first time that anyone has attempted to bring Leiji Matsumoto's *Harlock Saga* manga series to English speaking audiences. It is certainly the largest and longest manga translation project I have ever undertaken myself.

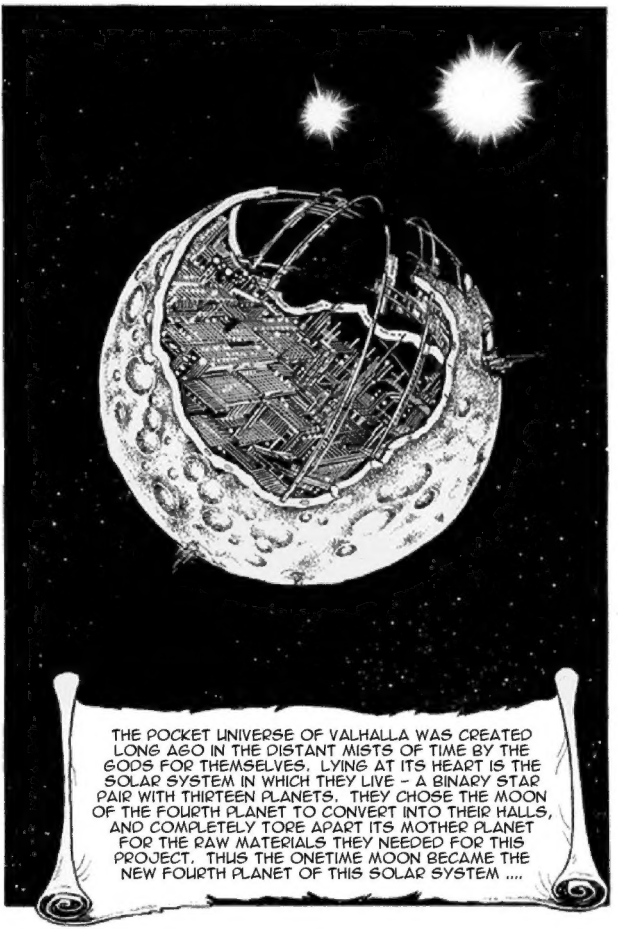
Götterdämmerung was supposed to be the fourth and final part of the *Harlock Saga* manga series. Like the previous parts, *The Valkyrie* and *Siegfried*, it was initially released on Shinchosa Publishing's Internet site (www.shinchosa.co.jp). It was available online in both the original Japanese and in a (somewhat pidgin) English translation. New panels were released every week or two, with the English version usually running behind the Japanese version by one installment. In March of 2001 the English version finally caught up with the Japanese one, but this was because no more panels were being released. The online manga did not get updated for several months, and then was eventually pulled in its entirety. Since *Götterdammerung* was never finished, stopping just short of what is believed to be its halfway mark, it was never commercially published.

This is the first time that *Götterdämerung* has been made available to Leijiverse fans since the online version was pulled by Shinchosa. As it turns out, I and at least two other people archived it in its entirety at that time. Unfortunately, our three archives are of the English version. We do not know if any additional panels were ever released in the Japanese original.

I have taken the liberty of cleaning up Shinchosa's own English translation for this "manga-ized" edition. I have also rewritten it somewhat both to make it a better read, and to better fit continuitywise with the other volumes I have adapted for English language readers. If there are any mistakes or mistranslations as a result of this, they are entirely my own.

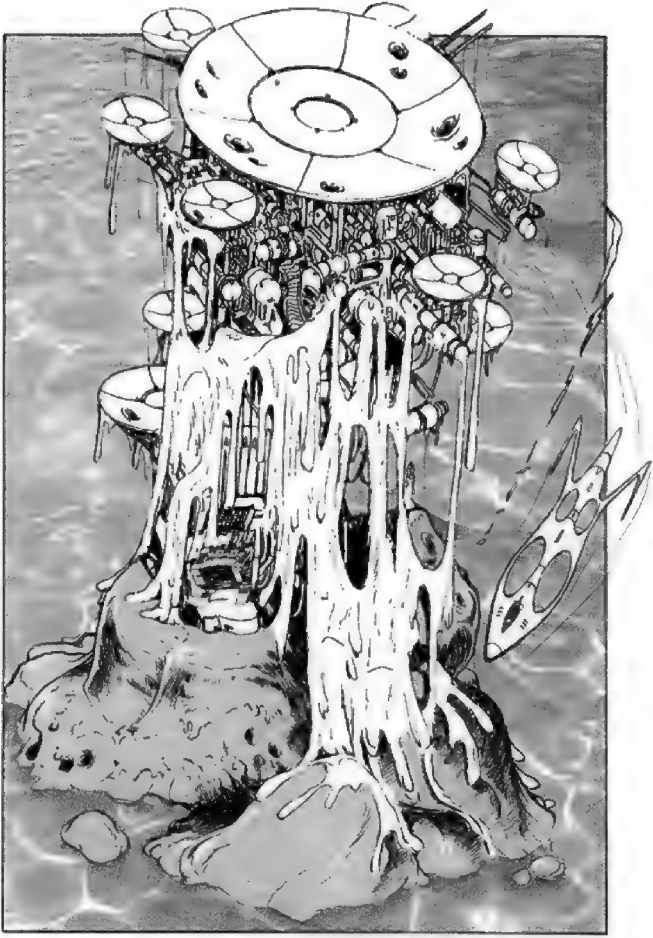
Götterdämmerung

Ring 67 : Again the Rhinegold


THE POCKET UNIVERSE OF VALHALLA WAS CREATED LONG AGO IN THE DISTANT MISTS OF TIME BY THE GODS FOR THEMSELVES. LYING AT ITS HEART IS THE SOLAR SYSTEM IN WHICH THEY LIVE – A BINARY STAR PAIR WITH THIRTEEN PLANETS. THEY CHOSE THE MOON OF THE FOURTH PLANET TO CONVERT INTO THEIR HALLS, AND COMPLETELY TORE APART ITS MOTHER PLANET FOR THE RAW MATERIALS THEY NEEDED FOR THIS PROJECT. THUS THE ONETIME MOON BECAME THE NEW FOURTH PLANET OF THIS SOLAR SYSTEM ....

HE HAS LEFT EARTH AND IS HEADING BACK TO THE PLANET RHINE, MY LORD. WHY, WE DO NOT KNOW.
ANY NEWS ON ALBERICH -- *OUR* ALBERICH, FROM OUR TIME?

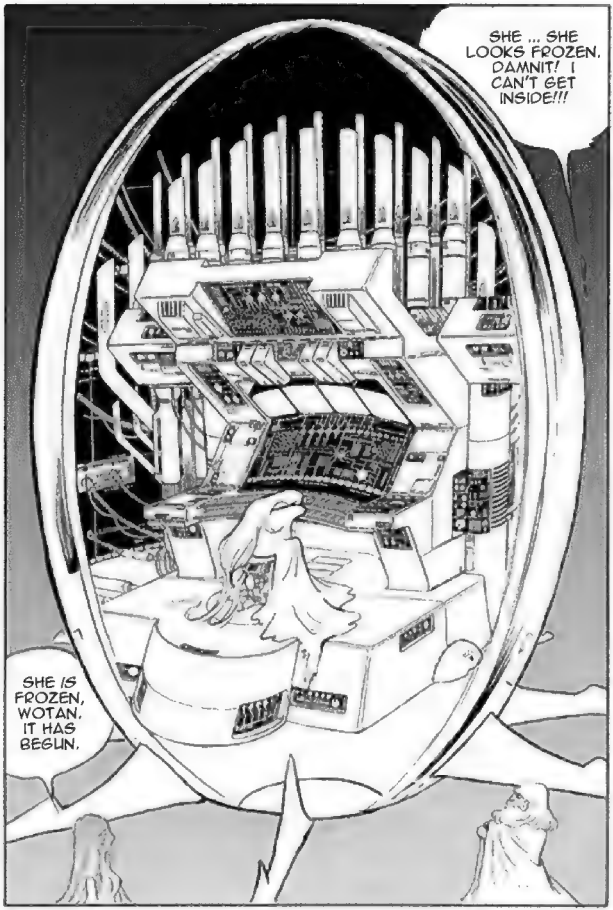
2964
The Planet Rhine



SO WHAT BROUGHT YOU BACK, FUTURE BROTHER?
I COULD NOT DO IT.
... AND THERE, THE DAIBA LABS WERE LONG ABANDONED DUE TO MY OWN PAST ACTIONS.
THE RINGS OF TIME ARE BENT. I WAS NOT ALLOWED TO CHANGE MY PAST. I WAS DIVERTED SOME YEARS AHEAD ...
BUT HEAR ME, WOTAN! I WILL MAKE THE RING IN DUE TIME -- AND THIS TIME, CAPTAIN HARLOCK WILL NOT STOP ME!
THE RHINEGOLD IS BACK!
IT IS BACK!
ALBERICH SEES IN THE RHINEGOLD ONLY A MEANS TO AN END. IF HE KNEW ITS TRUE SIGNIFICANCE -- IF HE KNEW THE PART IT WAS TRULY DESTINED TO PLAY IN THE HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSE, THEN HE WOULD NOT EVEN ATTEMPT TO MAKE A RING. HE WOULD GLADLY GIVE IT TO THE ONE WHOM DESTINY HAS DECREED WILL WIELD IT.

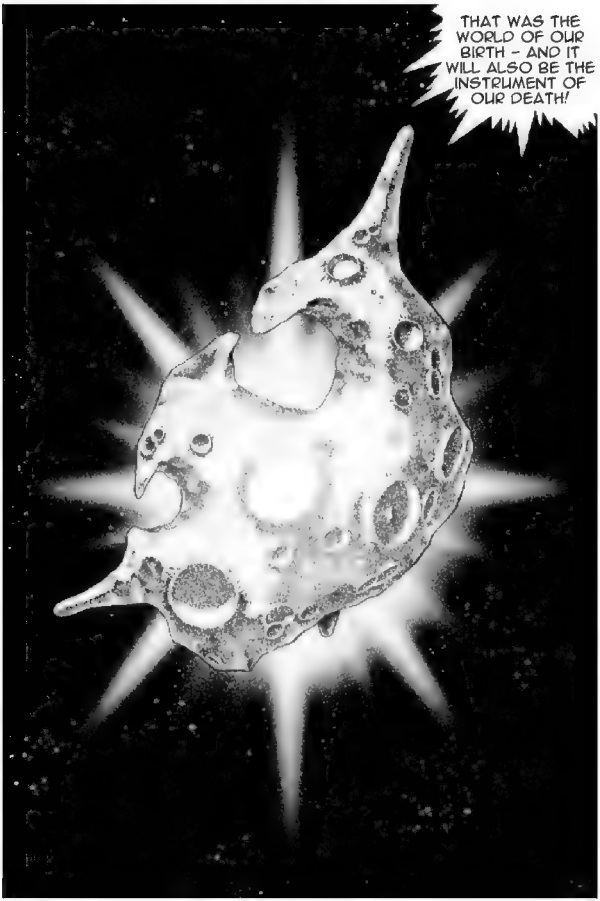
2972
Valhalla

WITHOUT HER PLAYING, TIME RESUMES IN VALHALLA -- AND OUR DOOM DRAWS EVER NIGH TO HAND!
WHY HAS THE COSMIC ORGAN STOPPED PLAYING? WHAT IS WRONG WITH FREYA?!


SHE ... SHE LOOKS FROZEN. DAMNIT! I CAN'T GET INSIDE!!!
SHE *IS* FROZEN, WOTAN. IT HAS BEGUN.

NO ... NOT NOW! IF I COULD BUT SOMEHOW FIND A WAY INTO THE ORGAN--
THE DAY OF RAGNAROK IS AT HAND, PREPARE YOURSELF, "LORD WOTAN."
NO ... !
THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN DO. THE TIME FOR YOUR PETTY SCHEMES IS AT AN END.
THIS CAPSULE WAS BUILT BY THE GIANTS OF RISENHEIM, FASOLT AND FAFNER, OUT OF THEIR LOVE FOR FREYA. ONLY SHE CAN FREELY PASS THROUGH.
I ... I MUST FIND FASOLT AND FAFNER! YES! IF I CAN CONVINCE THEM TO COME BACK, THEY CAN OPEN THE CAPSULE!! VALHALLA CAN STILL BE SAVED!!!

YOU HAVE NOT HEEDED ANY OF THE WARNINGS I GAVE YOU ... ABOUT ALBERICH ... ABOUT THE RHINEGOLD ... AND MOST ESPECIALLY, ABOUT THE HUMAN, HARLOCK.
NO, WOTAN. YOU WILL NOT FIND THEM, AND THEY WILL NOT COME BACK.
IT IS BY YOUR OWN HAND THAT RAGNAROK HAS NOW COME.
NO!!! THERE'S ONLY ONE THING TO DO! GET THE RHINEGOLD!! YES!!!
YOU THINK OF IT ONLY AS A TOOL OR DEVICE YOU CAN BEND AND SHAPE TO YOUR WILL, WOTAN ...
IT IS ONE OF THE SCATTERED REMNANTS OF THE SOLE WORLD OF THE LOST STAR ULTIMATE -- THE FIRST WORLD THAT WAS EVER BORN. THE RHINEGOLD IS ALL THAT REMAINS OF ITS HEART.
... BUT YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN THE TRUTH OF RHINE ITSELF ... OF WHICH THE RHINEGOLD IS BUT A PART.

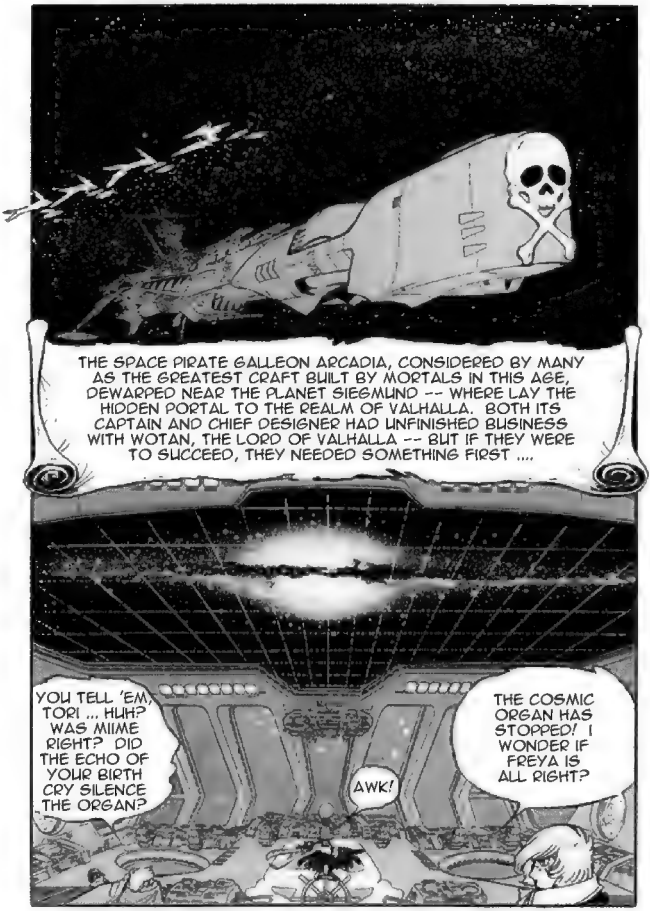

THAT WAS THE WORLD OF OUR BIRTH – AND IT WILL ALSO BE THE INSTRUMENT OF OUR DEATH!

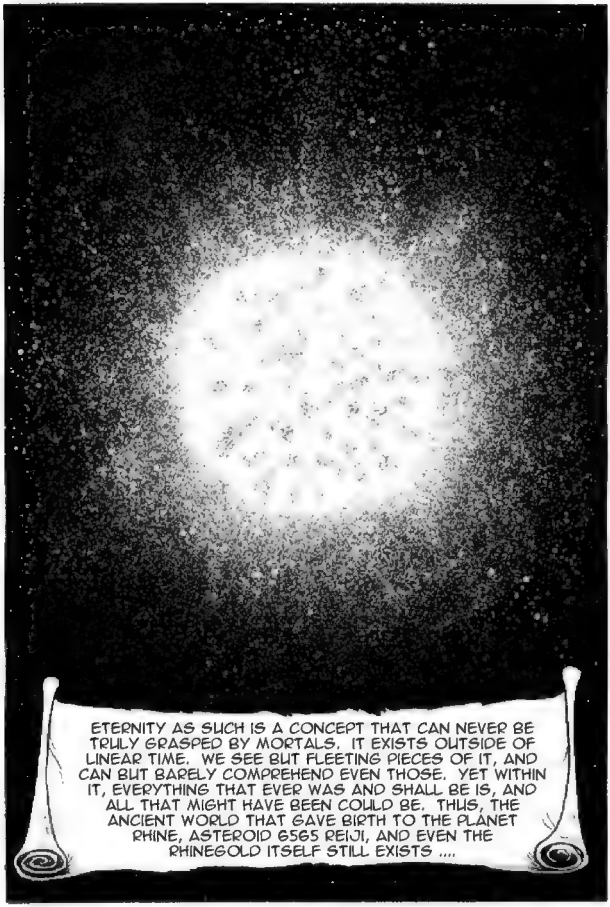
SILENCE, WOTAN! YOU WILL LISTEN!!
SHUT UP! JUST SHUT UP, ERDA!!! I DON'T WANT--
IT WAS BY YOUR HAND THAT VALHALLA WAS FIRST CREATED ... AND IT IT IS ALSO BY YOUR HAND THAT ITS DESTRUCTION HAS BEEN MADE POSSIBLE.
IT IS YOUR VERY ACTIONS, PAST AND PRESENT, THAT MADE POSSIBLE THE FALL OF THE GODS, WOTAN.
PREPARE YOURSELF, WOTAN. YOUR JUDGES ARE ON THEIR WAY.
I AM ERDA, THE DOOMSAYER OF THE GODS. I HAVE SPOKEN.
JUDGES? ... SHE MUST MEAN THOSE TWO ... THE LITTLE ONE ... AND HIM! NOT HIM!

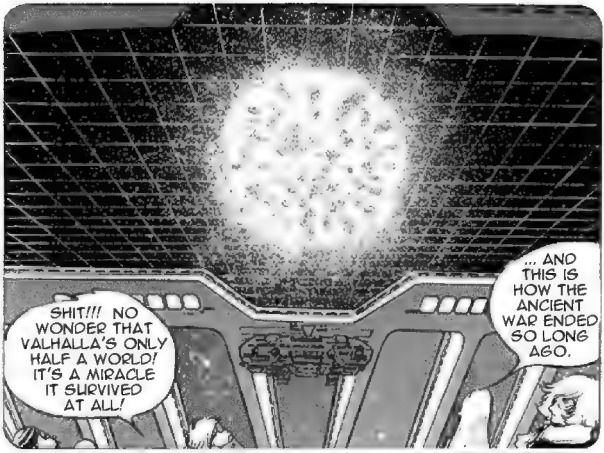
2972

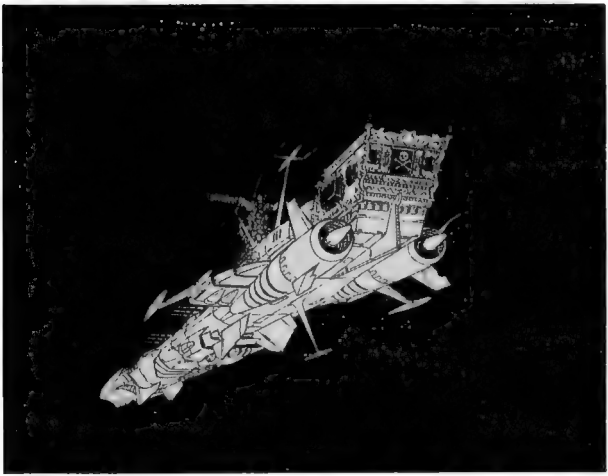
The Galactic Rim

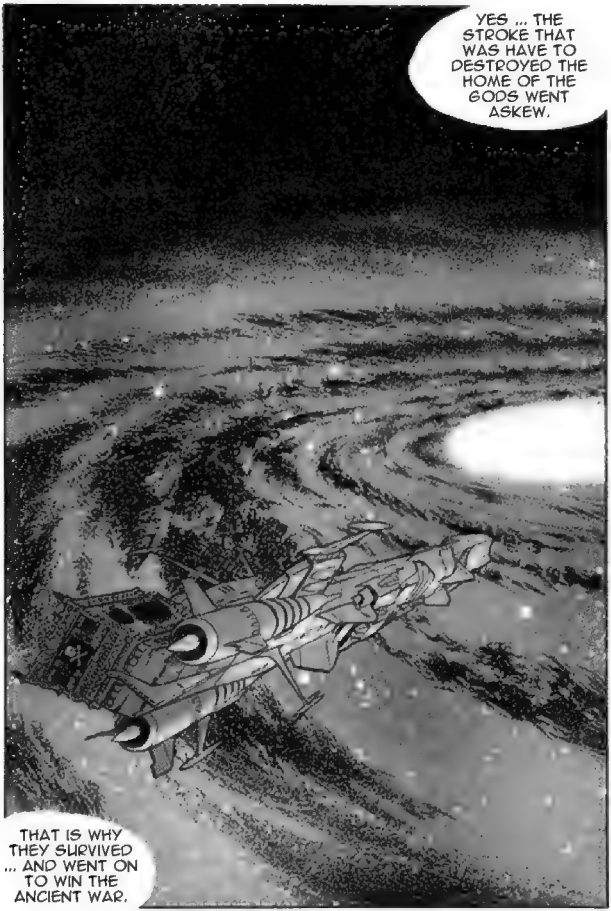
**(somewhere near
the planet Siegmund)**


THE SPACE PIRATE GALLEON ARCADIA, CONSIDERED BY MANY AS THE GREATEST CRAFT BUILT BY MORTALS IN THIS AGE, DEWARPED NEAR THE PLANET SIEGMUND -- WHERE LAY THE HIDDEN PORTAL TO THE REALM OF VALHALLA. BOTH ITS CAPTAIN AND CHIEF DESIGNER HAD UNFINISHED BUSINESS WITH WOTAN, THE LORD OF VALHALLA -- BUT IF THEY WERE TO SUCCEED, THEY NEEDED SOMETHING FIRST ....
YOU TELL 'EM, TORI ... HUH? WAS MIIME RIGHT? DID THE ECHO OF YOUR BIRTH CRY SILENCE THE ORGAN?
AWK!
THE COSMIC ORGAN HAS STOPPED! I WONDER IF FREYA IS ALL RIGHT?


ETERNITY AS SUCH IS A CONCEPT THAT CAN NEVER BE TRULY GRASPED BY MORTALS. IT EXISTS OUTSIDE OF LINEAR TIME. WE SEE BUT FLEETING PIECES OF IT, AND CAN BUT BARELY COMPREHEND EVEN THOSE. YET WITHIN IT, EVERYTHING THAT EVER WAS AND SHALL BE IS, AND ALL THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN COULD BE. THUS, THE ANCIENT WORLD THAT GAVE BIRTH TO THE PLANET RHINE, ASTEROID 6565 REIJI, AND EVEN THE RHINEGOLD ITSELF STILL EXISTS ....


SHIT!!! NO WONDER THAT VALHALLA'S ONLY HALF A WORLD! IT'S A MIRACLE IT SURVIVED AT ALL!
... AND THIS IS HOW THE ANCIENT WAR ENDED SO LONG AGO.




YES ... THE STROKE THAT WAS HAVE TO DESTROYED THE HOME OF THE GODS WENT ASKEW.
THAT IS WHY THEY SURVIVED ... AND WENT ON TO WIN THE ANCIENT WAR.

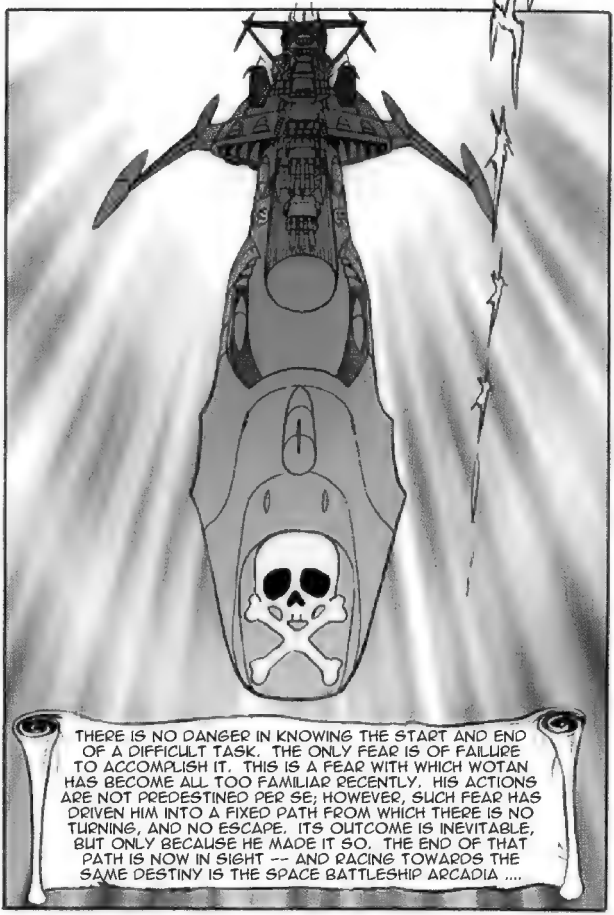
WHY IS THIS SO IMPORTANT, MIIME? WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO TELL US?
THAT PLANET ...
AND THIS IMAGE -- IT'S THE WORLD FROM WHICH THE RHINEGOLD, RHINE, AND ASTEROID 6565 REIJI CAME FROM?

... WAS LOST IN THE ANCIENT WAR, BROKEN UP ACROSS SPACE AND TIME ....
ITS POWER WAS TOO GREAT FOR THE GODS TO ALLOW TO REMAIN INTACT. ONE SMALL PIECE OF IT COULD CREATE LIFE ... OR DESTROY IT.

LOOKING AT IT REMINDS ME OF MY OWN HOME, NIBELHEIM. A DARK AND DREARY PLACE, YET IT WAS THE PLACE OF MY BIRTH ... AND MY HOME, FOR A TIME ....
IT WAS THE MOTHER OF ALL WORLDS FROM WHICH INTELLIGENT LIFE AROSE.
... AND ALL THAT REMAINS OF THE TREMENDOUS POWER IT ONCE HELD IS NOW CONTAINED WITHIN THE RHINEGOLD.
ONLY BITS AND PIECES OF THE MOTHER OF ALL WORLDS REMAIN, SCATTERED ACROSS THE RINGS OF TIME ...
... BUT NOW I HAVE A NEW HOME, ABOARD THIS SHIP, AND WITH YOU, MY HARLOCK!
THE GODS DESTROYED MY HOME AND RUINED MY PEOPLE ...
... AND WE ALL THREE HAVE SUFFERED AT THE HANDS OF THE GODS. IT IS YOUR DESTINY TO BRING THEM DOWN ONCE AND FOR ALL! WILL YOU DO IT, HARLOCK?
I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN GRATEFUL FOR THE LOVE YOU AND TOCHIRO HAVE SHOWN ME OVER THE YEARS ...

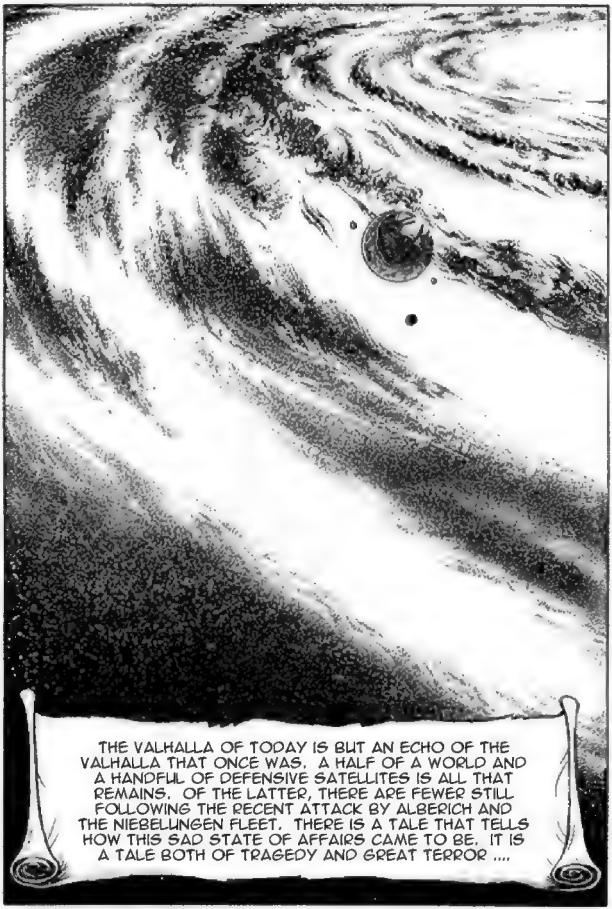
CHEER UP, MIIME! WE'RE GONNA FULFILL OUR DESTINIES AT LAST! THIS CALLS FOR A TOAST!
BUT OF COURSE. THE GODS HAVE WRONGED ALL OF US. IT'S TIME WE DID THIS THING AND GOT ON WITH OUR LIVES.
I WILL. THANK YOU.
THIS IS THE DAY YOU'VE LONG BEEN WAITING FOR, MIIME, SO CHEER UP!
DRINK ALL YOU WANT! THERE'S PLENTY FOR THE CREW, TOO!
YOU JUST NAME YOUR POISON, MIIME! I MADE SURE THE BAR WAS FULLY STOCKED BEFORE WE LEFT!
YES, BUT NOT TO MAKE A RING. THAT IS NOT ITS TRUE PURPOSE. I WILL TELL YOU THAT ONCE WE HAVE SECURED IT.
LET ME SEE IF I'VE GOT THIS STRAIGHT. NOW WE NEED THE RHINEGOLD?
HE SURE AS HELL WON'T! AND IF WE'RE NOT GOING TO REMAKE THE RING, THEN WHAT?
WE'LL TRUST YOU, MIIME -- BUT I DON'T THINK ALBERICH WILL LIKE THIS.
HMMM ... THERE MUST BE SOME OTHER MECHANISM INVOLVED -- BUT WHAT DOES THE RHINEGOLD HAVE TO DO WITH IT?
WHATEVER YOU'VE GOT IN MIND, MIIME, IT'S GOT TO BE PRETTY KICK-ASS IF IT'S GOING TO DESTROY VALHALLA!

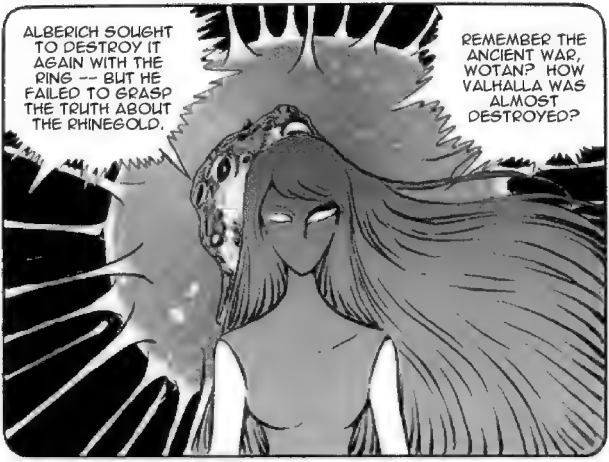
WE'D BETTER HURRY UP AND GET BACK TO THE PLANET RHINE, HARLOCK, BEFORE ALBERICH GETS THERE FIRST!
IF THAT IDIOT IS TRUE TO FORM, HE'LL TRY TO STEAL THE RHINEGOLD AGAIN - AND WE'VE GOT TO BEAT HIM TO IT!

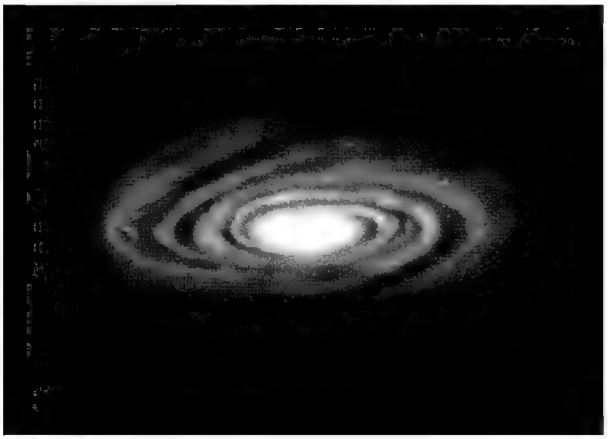

THERE IS NO DANGER IN KNOWING THE START AND END OF A DIFFICULT TASK. THE ONLY FEAR IS OF FAILURE TO ACCOMPLISH IT. THIS IS A FEAR WITH WHICH WOTAN HAS BECOME ALL TOO FAMILIAR RECENTLY. HIS ACTIONS ARE NOT PREDESTINED PER SE; HOWEVER, SUCH FEAR HAS DRIVEN HIM INTO A FIXED PATH FROM WHICH THERE IS NO TURNING, AND NO ESCAPE. ITS OUTCOME IS INEVITABLE, BUT ONLY BECAUSE HE MADE IT SO. THE END OF THAT PATH IS NOW IN SIGHT -- AND RACING TOWARDS THE SAME DESTINY IS THE SPACE BATTLESHIP ARCADIA ....

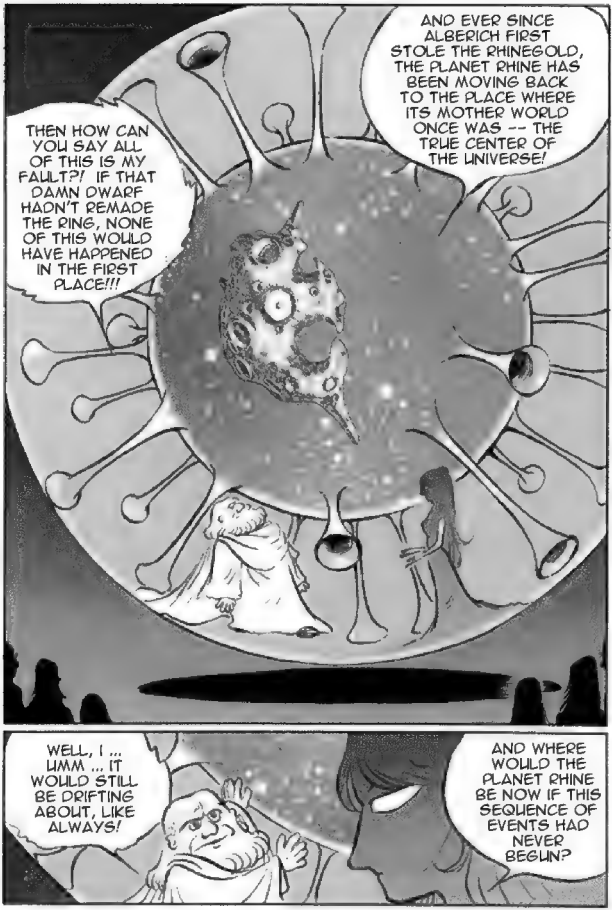
Götterdämmerung

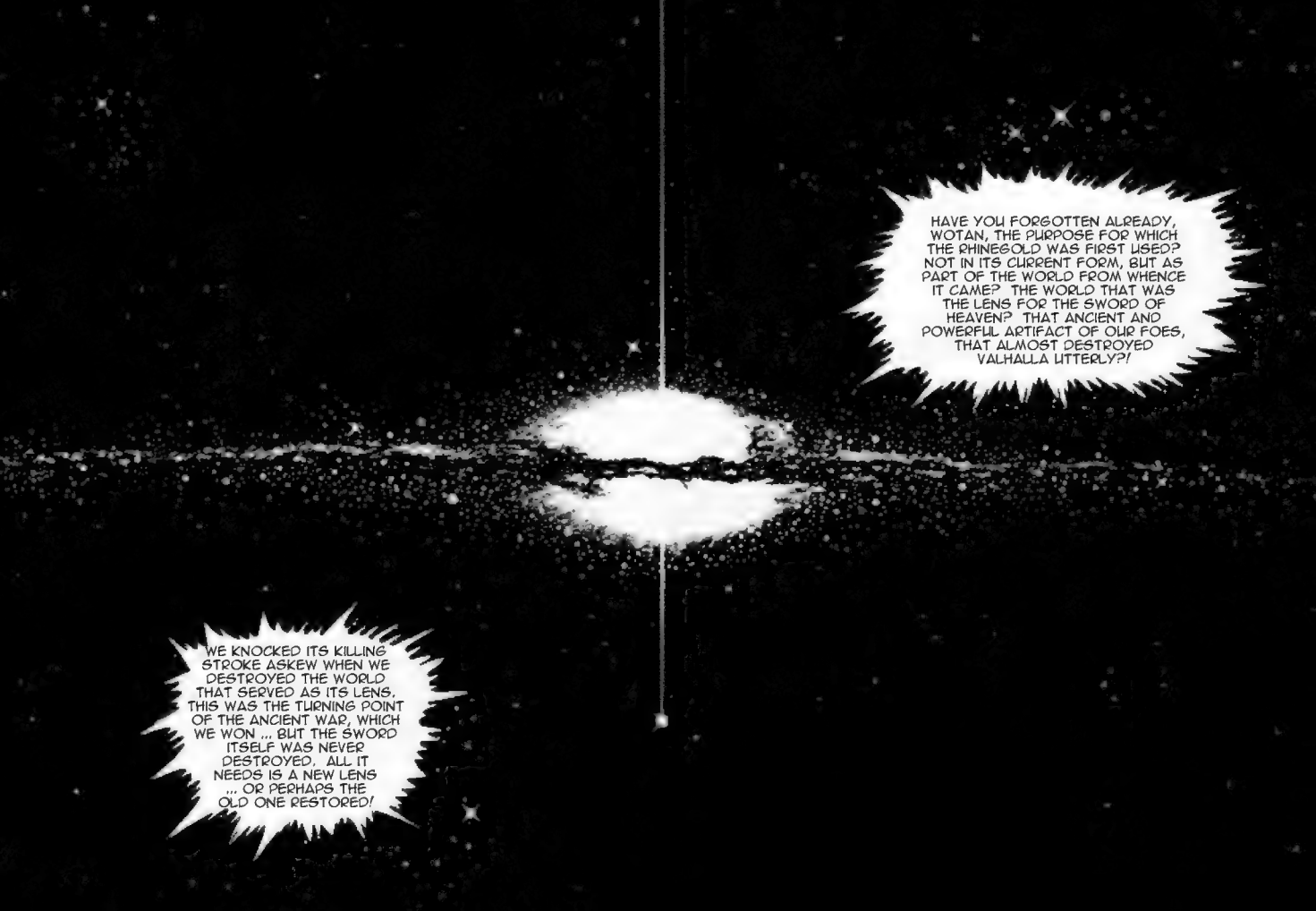
Ring 68 : The Sword of Heaven


THE VALHALLA OF TODAY IS BUT AN ECHO OF THE VALHALLA THAT ONCE WAS. A HALF OF A WORLD AND A HANDFUL OF DEFENSIVE SATELLITES IS ALL THAT REMAINS. OF THE LATTER, THERE ARE FEWER STILL FOLLOWING THE RECENT ATTACK BY ALBERICH AND THE NIEBELUNGEN FLEET. THERE IS A TALE THAT TELLS HOW THIS SAD STATE OF AFFAIRS CAME TO BE. IT IS A TALE BOTH OF TRAGEDY AND GREAT TERROR ....


ALBERICH SOUGHT TO DESTROY IT AGAIN WITH THE RING -- BUT HE FAILED TO GRASP THE TRUTH ABOUT THE RHINEGOLD.
REMEMBER THE ANCIENT WAR, WOTAN? HOW VALHALLA WAS ALMOST DESTROYED?




AND EVER SINCE ALBERICH FIRST STOLE THE RHINEGOLD, THE PLANET RHINE HAS BEEN MOVING BACK TO THE PLACE WHERE ITS MOTHER WORLD ONCE WAS -- THE TRUE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE!
THEN HOW CAN YOU SAY ALL OF THIS IS MY FAULT?! IF THAT DAMN DWARF HADN'T REMADE THE RING, NONE OF THIS WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IN THE FIRST PLACE!!!
AND WHERE WOULD THE PLANET RHINE BE NOW IF THIS SEQUENCE OF EVENTS HAD NEVER BEGUN?
WELL, I ... UMM ... IT WOULD STILL BE DRIFTING ABOUT, LIKE ALWAYS!


HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN ALREADY, WOTAN, THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH THE RHINEGOLD WAS FIRST USED? NOT IN ITS CURRENT FORM, BUT AS PART OF THE WORLD FROM WHENCE IT CAME? THE WORLD THAT WAS THE LENS FOR THE SWORD OF HEAVEN? THAT ANCIENT AND POWERFUL ARTIFACT OF OUR FOES, THAT ALMOST DESTROYED VALHALLA UTTERLY?!
WE KNOCKED ITS KILLING STROKE ASKEW WHEN WE DESTROYED THE WORLD THAT SERVED AS ITS LENS. THIS WAS THE TURNING POINT OF THE ANCIENT WAR, WHICH WE WON ... BUT THE SWORD ITSELF WAS NEVER DESTROYED. ALL IT NEEDS IS A NEW LENS ... OR PERHAPS THE OLD ONE RESTORED!

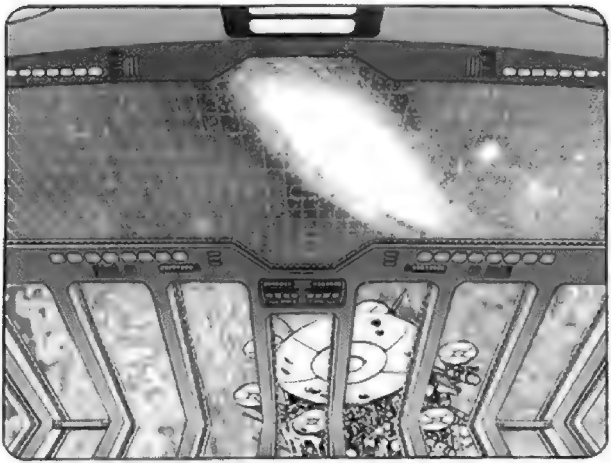
NO ....
THIS IS WHERE THE PLANET RHINE IS HEADING, WOTAN! IT RETURNS TO THE SWORD OF HEAVEN!
VALHALLA WILL BE DESTROYED, AND THIS POCKET UNIVERSE OF YOURS TURNED INTO A GIANT BLACK HOLE!
THIS TIME, THE GODS ARE TOO WEAK AND COMPLACENT TO STOP IT SHOULD IT EVER BE USED AGAIN.
... AND IF ANY DO SOMEHOW SURVIVE, THEN THERE CAN BE NO COMING BACK. EVER.
THERE WILL BE NO ESCAPE FOR ANY OF US. ALL OF US WILL BE CAUGHT BY IT ...
EVER?
EVER -- AND WE TWO WILL NOT BE AMONG ANY THAT MIGHT SURVIVE. OUR FATES WERE DECREED LONG AGO. YOU WERE DOOMED TO BRING BRING ABOUT THE DOWNFALL OF YOUR BELOVED VALHALLA, JUST AS I WAS DOOMED TO PLAY THE PART OF YOUR UNWILLING CASSANDRA.

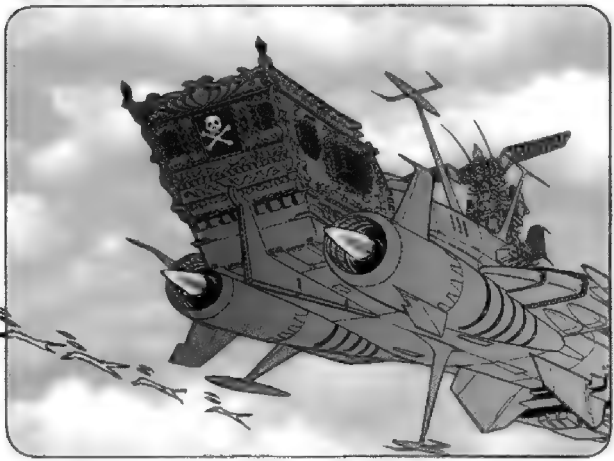
I DO ... AND IT IS A THING MOST TERRIFYING! YET IT AWAITS FOR BOTH OF US, AND SOON.
DO YOU KNOW THE TRUE MEANING OF "TOTAL OBLIVION," WOTAN?
--NOTHING! AND I AM ERDA THE WISE, CHIEF AMONG THE NORNS! I KNOW MUCH OF WHICH YOU DO NOT, "LORD WOTAN!"
HOW COULD YOU KNOW AND I NOT?! I AM WOTAN, LORD OF THE GODS AND MASTER OF--
IT HAS HUNG OVER OUR HEADS EVER SINCE, LIKE THE SWORD OF DAMOCLES IN THE LEGENDS OF THAT PLANET WHOSE BEINGS YOU HATE SO MUCH.
HAS IT EVER OCCURED TO YOU TO ASK YOURSELF WHY WE DID NOT DESTROY THE SWORD OF HEAVEN UTTERLY WHEN WE HAD THE CHANCE? WHAT HELD US BACK?

WE GODS HAVE FALLEN FAR FROM THE MIGHT AND POWER WE ONCE WIELDED ACROSS THE RINGS OF TIME. WE NOW LACK THE POWER TO UNMAKE THE SWORD OF HEAVEN ... AND PART OF ITS ORIGINAL LENS RETURNS TO IT. I DEEM IT WILL BE SUFFICENT TO FINISH THE JOB OUR FOES STARTED LONG AGO ... SO LONG AGO. THE SWORD OF HEAVEN IS ABOUT TO BE REFORGED!

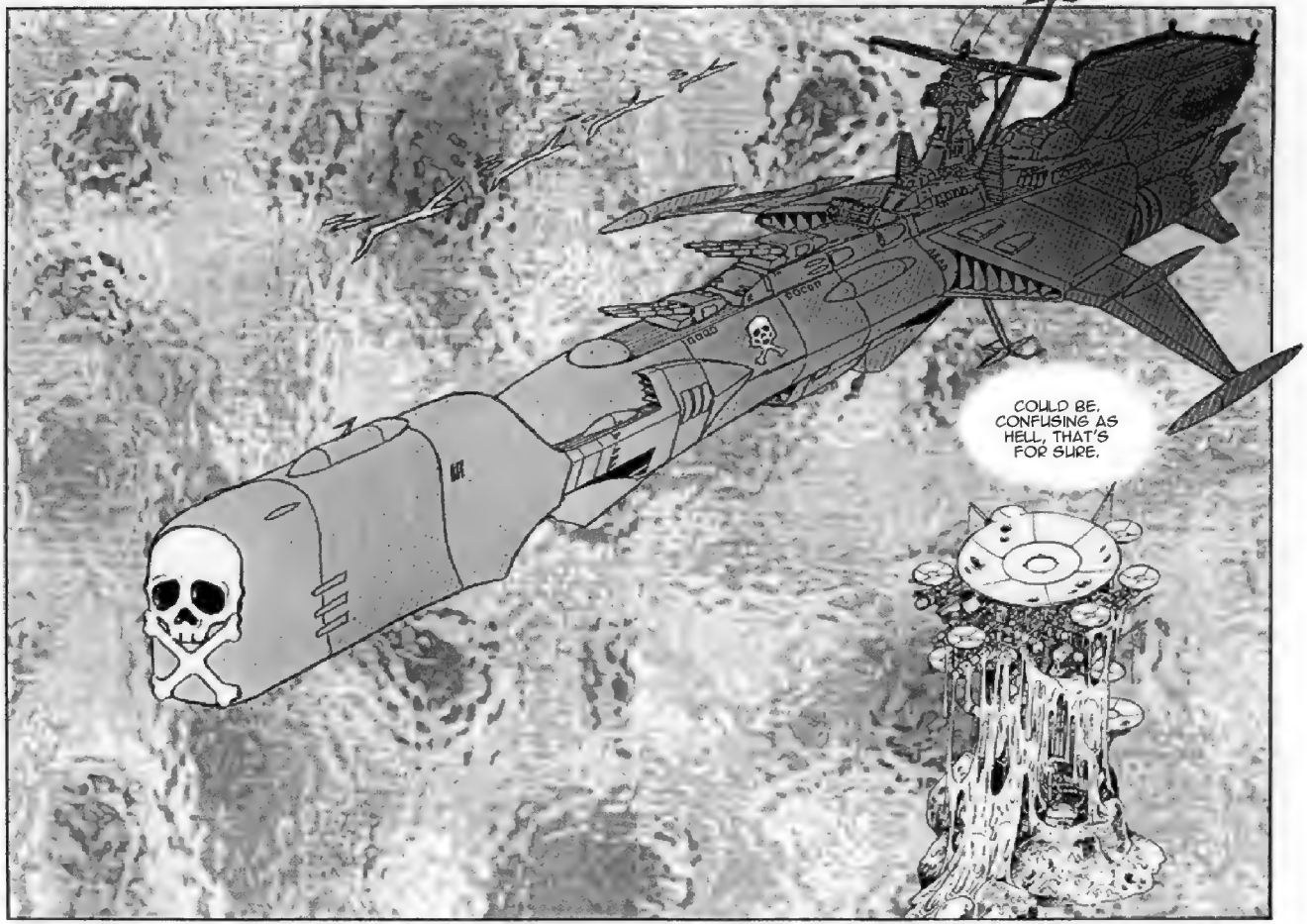
THEY HAVE BECOME AWARE OF THE PART THEY MUST PLAY, AND WILL SOON KNOW WHAT THEY MUST DO. PREPARE YOURSELF, WOTAN. RAGNAROK IS AT HAND.
EVEN NOW, THE SONS OF GREAT HARLOCK AND DR. OYAMA ARE ON FINAL APPROACH TO THE PLANET RHINE.
THEN AM I TO JUST SIT IDLY BY, WHILE THIS "FATE" BEFALLS ME? I THINK NOT! AT LEAST I WILL GO DOWN FIGHTING!!!
THE PLANET RHINE ... WHO WOULD HAVE BELIEVED ITS TRUE ORIGIN, AND THAT OF THE RHINEGOLD ITSELF? WHO COULD HAVE KNOWN THAT THE TWO WERE LINKED BY A BOND AS OLD AS THE UNIVERSE ITSELF? YET EVEN NOW THE ARCADIA CLOSES ON IT, WITH TWO ON BOARD WHO ARE QUICKLY BECOMING AWARE OF THIS -- AND THE PART THEY ARE DESTINED TO PLAY IN THE FINAL ACT OF A DRAMA WHOSE OPENING WAS SET IN THE ANCIENT WAR LONG AGO ....

ALL THINGS IN THE UNIVERSE HAVE A BEGINNING AND AN END. THE PLANET RHINE HAD A BEGINNING IN THE LOST DAYS OF ANTIQUITY, AND NOW MOVES TO THE END OF ITS DAYS. IT ONCE WINKED OUT OF THIS TIME AND SPACE DUE TO THE THEFT OF THE RHINEGOLD, BUT WAS RESTORED WHEN THE RING WAS UNMADE AND THE RHINEGOLD BROUGHT BACK. IT THEN REAPPEARED FROM WHEREVER IT HAD GONE, AS IF NOTHING HAD HAPPENED. THE RHINEGOLD HAS BEEN THERE EVER SINCE ... BUT NOW, THE THIEF HAS RETURNED ....





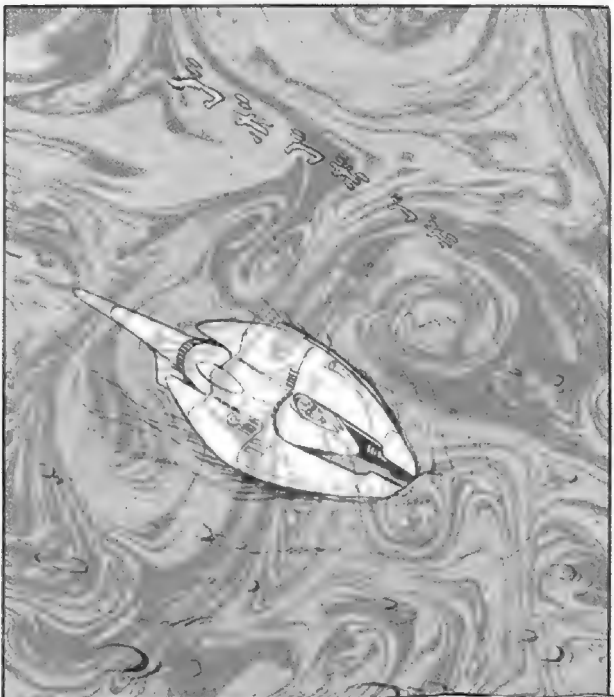
IS THIS MORE OF WOTAN'S MEDDLING IN TIME?
THAT'S NOT THE SAME ORGAN! I MEAN IT LOOKS THE SAME, BUT THE DAMAGE IS DIFFERENT!
I DON'T SEE THE THREE RHINEMAIDENS ANYWHERE ... BUT THAT ORGAN ....
IS THIS RHINE FROM ANOTHER RING OF TIME?
YES ... YOU'RE RIGHT. THAT DAMAGE LOOKS OLDER THAN THE LAST TIME WE VISITED HERE.


COULD BE. CONFUSING AS HELL, THAT'S FOR SURE.

I CAN SENSE THE THREE RHINEMAIDENS. THEY ARE IN THE UNDERGROUND CHAMBER OF THE RHINEGOLD.
THEY ARE SO ALONE ... AND I KNOW HOW THEY MUST FEEL ....
THEY ARE SHIELDING THE RHINEGOLD WITH THEIR OWN BODIES. THIS TIME, THEY ARE DETERMINED THAT NO ONE WILL TAKE THEM BY SURPRISE, AS ALBERICH DID BEFORE.

THE RHINEGOLD IS ALL THAT REMAINS OF THE GOLDEN CORE OF THE WORLD THAT THE PLANET RHINE ONCE WAS. EVEN THIS ONE SMALL PIECE HAS TREMENDOUS POWER, AS YOU WELL KNOW.

MY BROTHER IS HERE, TOO ... SOMEWHERE. THIS TIME, THEY ARE READY FOR HIM. THIS WORLD WILL BE HIS TOMB.
WHY DID YOU CHANGE INTO YOUR BLACK DRESS, MIIME?
MIIME, THE NIBELUNGEN WERE WIPED OUT IN THE ATTACK ON VALHALLA, SAVE FOR ALBERICH AND YOURSELF. IF HE DIES, YOU'LL BE THE ONLY ONE LEFT OF YOUR KIND -- THE LAST NIBELUNG.
YOU MEAN THEY'RE GOING TO KILL HIM?
SURELY WE CAN DO--
ERK?
I KNOW ... AND THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN DO TO STOP IT. SOON, I WILL BE ALONE ....
ALBERICH!
HE'S SEEKING THE WAY INTO THE CHAMBER OF THE RHINEGOLD. THEY WILL HAVE MOVED IT FROM LAST TIME.
CAP'N? I'VE SPOTTED A LARGE SHIP UNDERWATER, GOING DOWN FAST TO THE BOTTOM. CARE TO GUESS WHO?

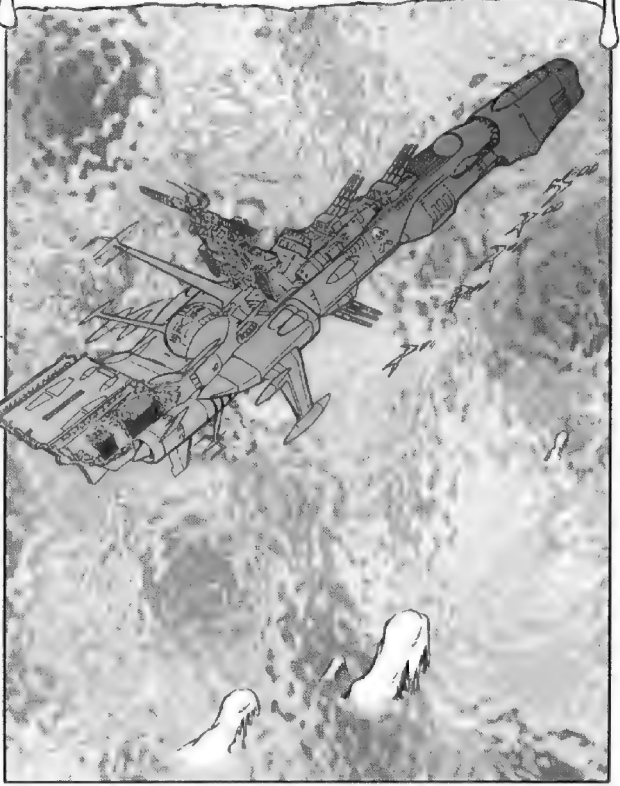


EVERY NOW AND THEN, A PLAYER APPEARS ON THE STAGE OF GREAT EVENTS WHO HAS NO BUSINESS BEING THERE. THEY LIVE ONLY BY THEIR OWN DESIRES AND THINK NOTHING OF THE FUTURE. SUCH A MAN IS PRINCE ALBERICH OF THE NIBELUNGEN. HIS OBSESSION WITH THE RHINEGOLD HAS RUINED WHAT MIGHT HAVE OTHERWISE BEEN A NOBLE AND ADMIRABLE LIFE. SO WHY IS SUCH A MAN INVOLVED IN THESE EVENTS? HE IS THE CATALYST THAT SET THEM IN MOTION -- AND TRUE TO NATURE, HE IS DESTINED TO FLAME OUT ONCE HIS PART IS CONCLUDED.

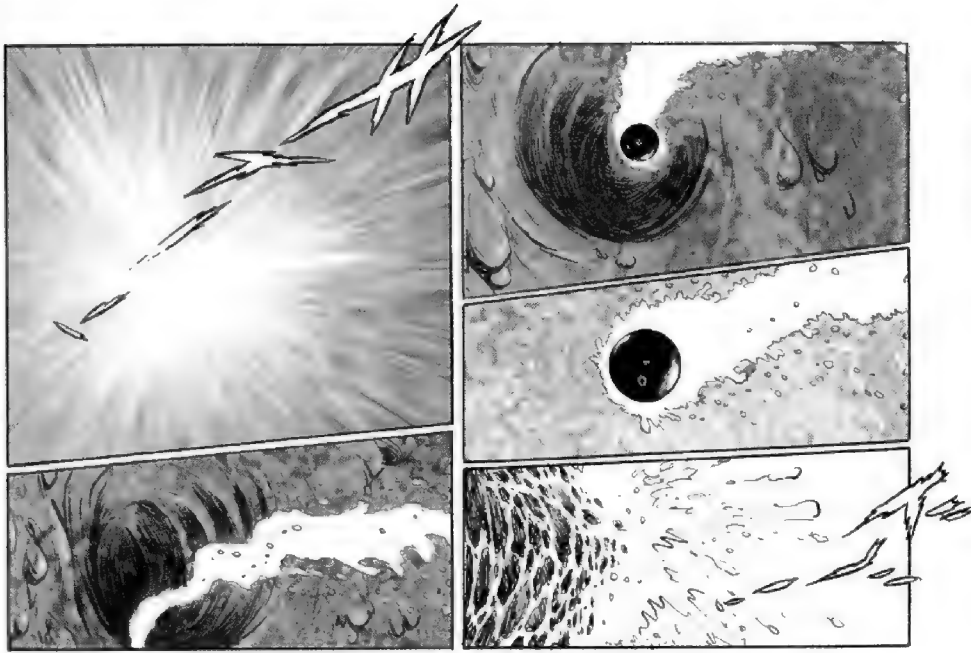
Götterdämmerung

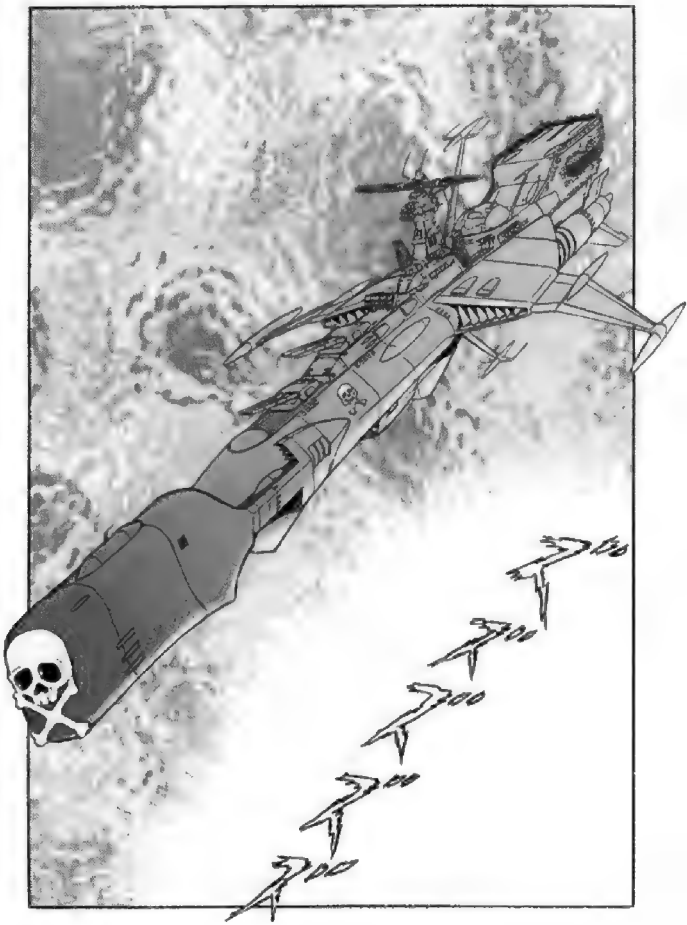
Ring 69 : Full Circle

NONE OF THE ANCIENT LEGENDS AND MYTHS CONCERNING THE RHINEGOLD EVER TELL OF ITS ORIGINS OR PURPOSE. IT IS SIMPLY THERE -- AN ARTIFACT, A TREASURE, A GOAL OF A QUEST. NOT EVEN ALBERICH, WHO HAD PERHAPS DWELT ON IT LONGER THAN ANYONE, HAD ANY INKLING AS TO ITS TRUE NATURE. IF HE HAD, THEN THIS TALE BEING TOLD MIGHT HAVE BEEN QUITE DIFFERENT INDEED!

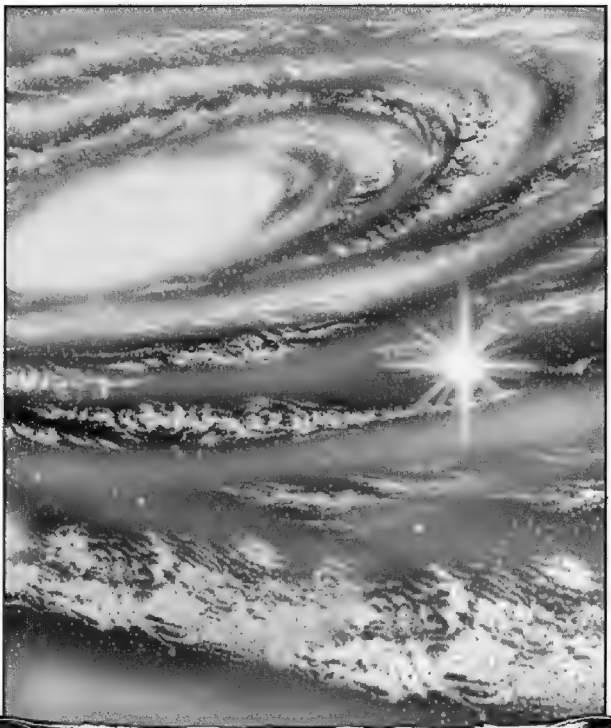


YEAH -- I THINK WE SHOULD USE ... THAT.
YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY, MISTER YATTARAN?
A MOST EXCELLENT IDEA!
OH, THAT!
I LOVE THIS JOB!
GO GET 'EM, KID!
THAT'S PERFECT. THE JOB'S ALL YOURS, YATTARAN.
DO WHAT YOU MUST, HARLOCK. TO ME, HE IS ALREADY DEAD.
HOPEFULLY THIS WILL FORCE HIM TO THE SURFACE.
HEY, ALBERICH! TAKE THAT!!!



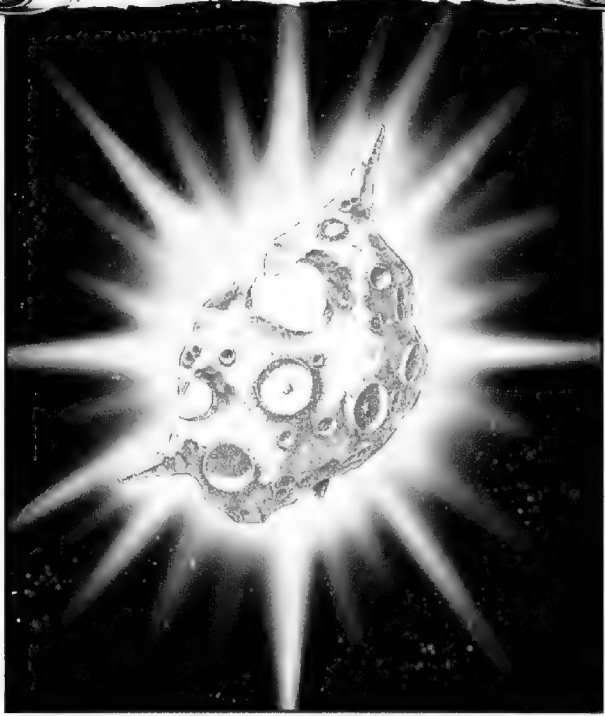


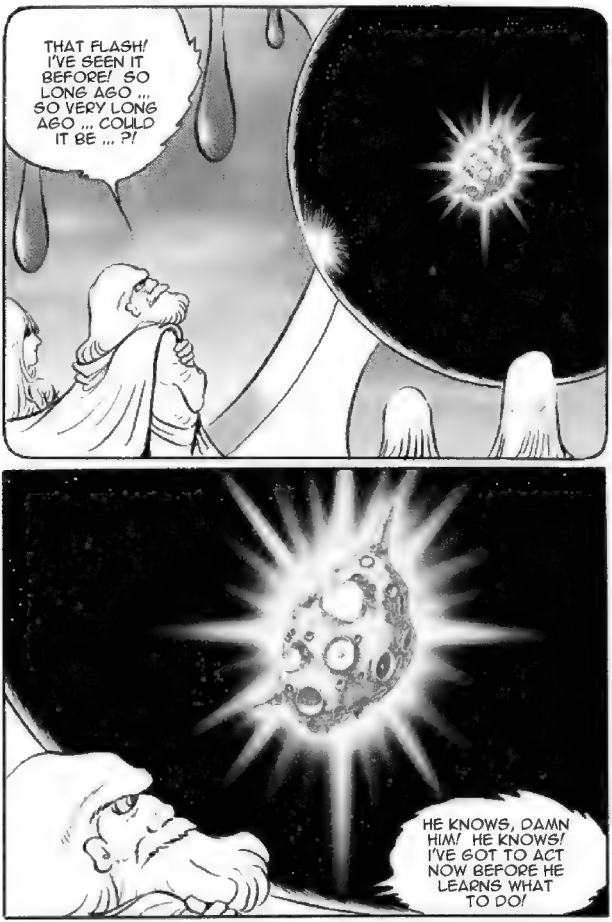
I THINK MAYBE THIS IS THE FIRST TIME ANYONE'S TRIED USING AN ULTRASOUND BOMB AS A DEPTH CHARGE.
IT SHOULDN'T HURT HIM -- BUT IT'S GONNA WRECK THAT SHIP OF HIS! HOPE HE MAKES IT OUT BEFORE IT BREAKS UP!



THE RHINEGOLD CAUGHT THE EXPLOSION AND AMPLIFIED IT, MAKING IT FAR MORE POWERFUL THAN IT NORMALLY WOULD HAVE BEEN. IT ALSO CAUSED THE PLANET RHINE TO FLASH LIKE A NOVA BURST IN THE INFINITE VOID OF THE SEA OF STARS. WOTAN SAW THIS FLASH FROM HIS THRONE IN VALHALLA, BUT HAD NO IDEA WHAT CAUSED IT OR WHY. IT WAS ENOUGH TO UNNERVE HIM, THOUGH -- FOR ANYTHING HE COULD NOT CONTROL OR INFLUENCE DISTURBED HIM GREATLY.

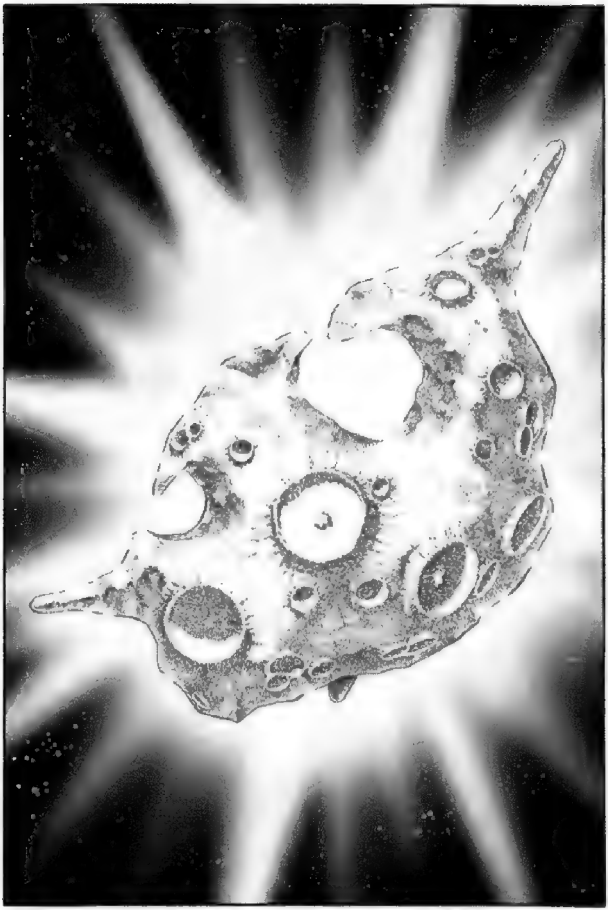
THIS WAS THE SECOND TIME IN ITS LONG HISTORY THAT THE RHINEGOLD HAD GIVEN OFF SUCH A BURST. THE FIRST WAS LONG AGO IN THE MISTS OF THE PAST, DURING THE ANCIENT WAR, WHEN THE WORLD FROM WHENCE IT CAME WAS STILL WHOLE AND THE RHINEGOLD BUT A SMALL PART OF ITS GOLDEN CORE. IT IS SAID THAT THE FLASH IT GAVE OFF AT THAT TIME ALMOST DESTROYED VALHALLA ITSELF. WHILE THIS SECOND FLASH WAS NOWHERE NEAR THAT MAGNITUDE, IT WAS STILL BRIGHT ENOUGH TO BE SEEN BY ALMOST ALL POINTS IN THE UNIVERSE ... ALTHOUGH ITS LIGHT WOULD TAKE GENERATIONS TO REACH MOST OF THEM.



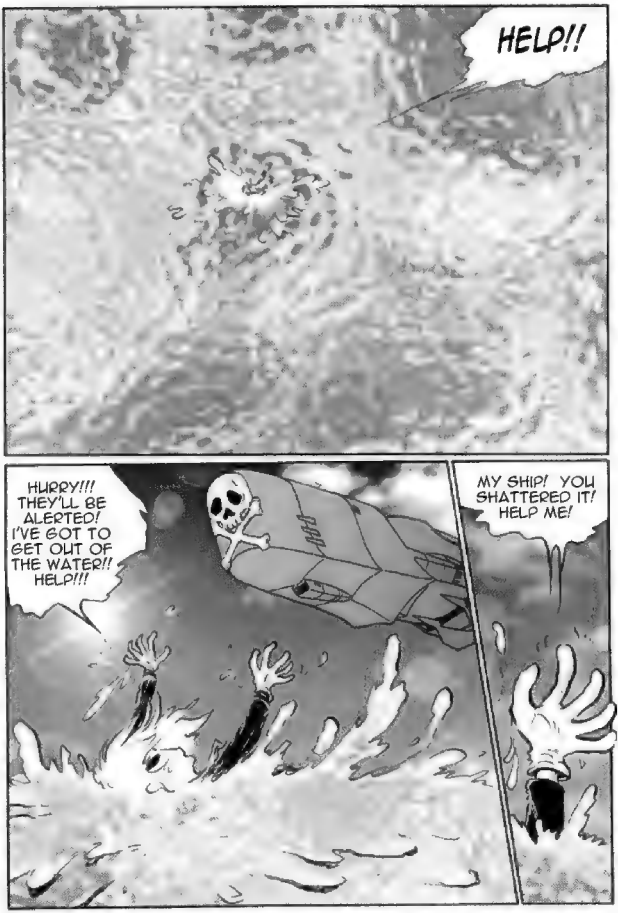

THAT FLASH! I'VE SEEN IT BEFORE! SO LONG AGO ... SO VERY LONG AGO ... COULD IT BE ... ?!
HE KNOWS, DAMN HIM! HE KNOWS! I'VE GOT TO ACT NOW BEFORE HE LEARNS WHAT TO DO!

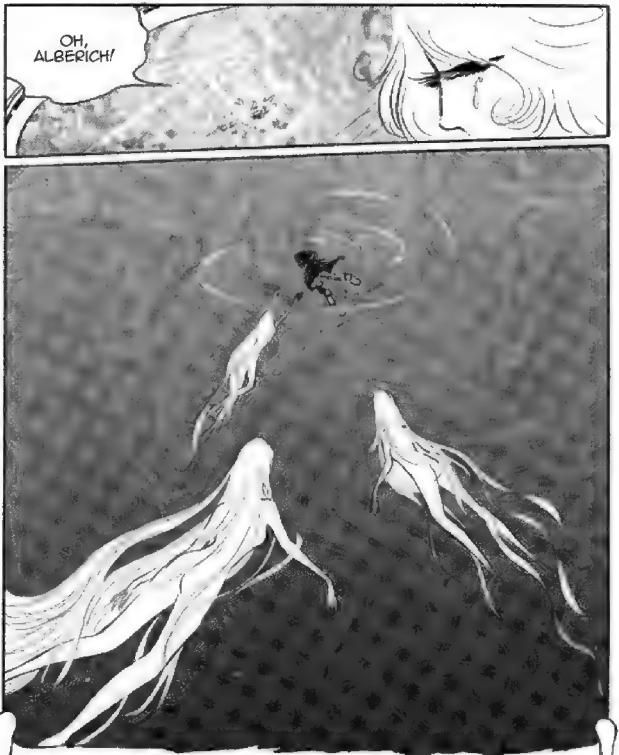
... DEAD.
I WOULD VENTURE TO SAY THAT HE'S ...
WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO ALBERICH, MY LORD WOTAN?
NO! NOT KREMHILD!!!
ALBERICH HAS FAILED US! WE MUST NOW ACT WITH ALL HASTE! SUMMON THE VALKYRIES, AND I ALSO WANT YOU TO SUMMON KREMHILD!

SILENCE! I SAID GO FETCH HER! DO IT NOW!
M-MY LORD! SHE'S A MAD WOMAN, A BESERKER! SHE CAN'T BE CON--
YES, FRICKA. THINGS HAVE GONE THIS FAR. NOW DO AS YOU'RE TOLD. GO!!!
ARE WE THIS BAD OFF, MY LORD?
PERHAPS .... LET'S GO.
HAS LORD WOTAN LOST HIS MIND?
... BUT HE WON'T BE ABLE TO USE IT IF I CAN GET MY HANDS ON THE RHINEGOLD!
HARLOCK IS GOING TO TRY FOR THE SWORD OF HEAVEN ...
VALHALLA MUST NOT FALL!!!
I WILL NOT LET VALHALLA FALL! THIS MORTAL WILL NOT DESTROY THE GODS!
AND YET ....

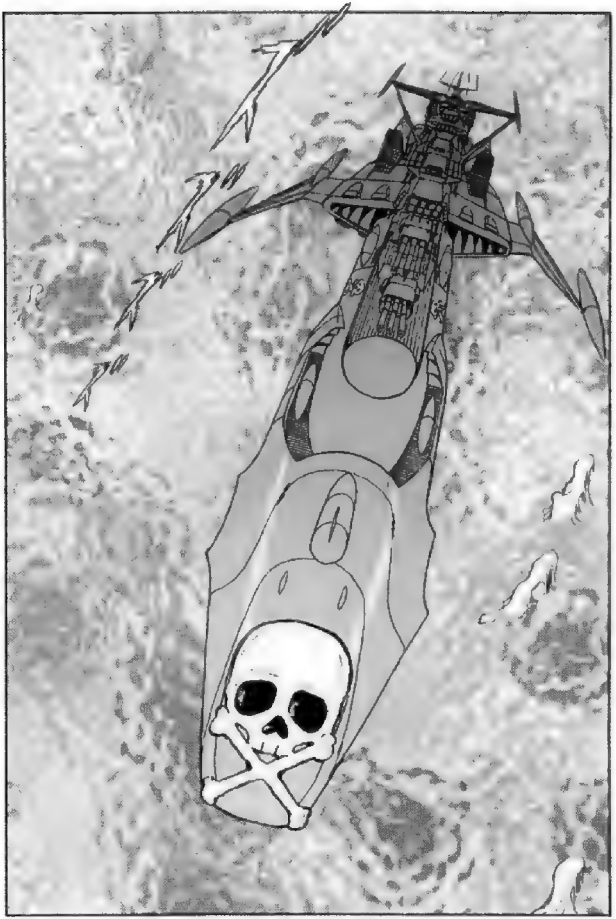


BARE ASS ... I JUST SAW MIIME'S BARE ASS ...
WHAT THE HELL'S WRONG WITH YOU?
WELL, WELL!
THE LIGHT'S FADING ... AND LOOK WHAT WE'VE CAUGHT BELOW!
D'YOU KNOW YOU'RE HOT FOR SOMEONE THAT OLD?
HA-HA-HAH!
IT'S ALL RIGHT. I'VE BEEN LEERED AT FOR EONS. I'M QUITE USED TO IT BY NOW.

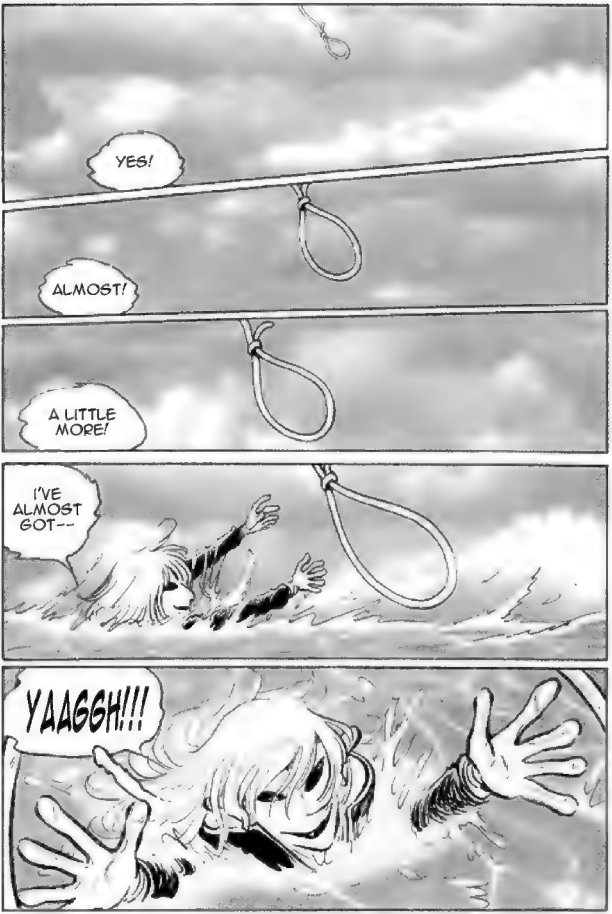

HELP!!
HURRY!!! THEY'LL BE ALERTED! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF THE WATER!! HELP!!!
MY SHIP! YOU SHATTERED IT! HELP ME!



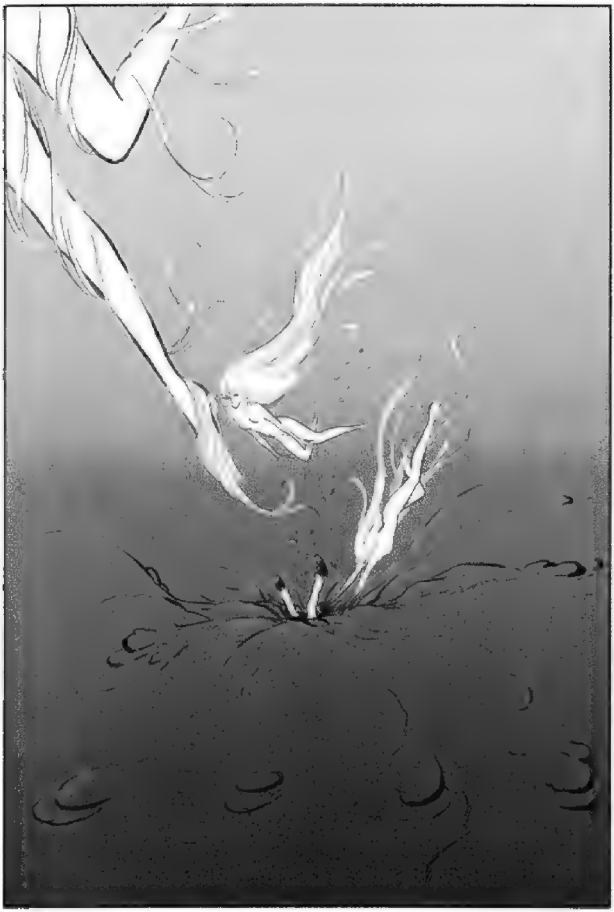
EVEN AS SHE LOOKED DOWN UPON HER BROTHER FLAILING IN THE WATERS BELOW, MIIME SAW THE THREE SHADOWS RISING UP TOWARDS HIM. SHE KNEW THAT NOTHING COULD SAVE HIM THIS TIME. SHE COULD SENSE THE ECHO OF HERSELF FROM THAT OTHER RING OF TIME – THE ONE THAT HAD MADE THE ORGAN AS IT WAS NOW, NOT AS THEY HAD LEFT IT – AND THUS SHE KNEW THAT THE RHINEMAIDENS HAD BEEN FOREWARNED. ALL SHE COULD DO NOW WAS WATCH AS THE TRAGEDY BELOW HER UNFOLDED ....

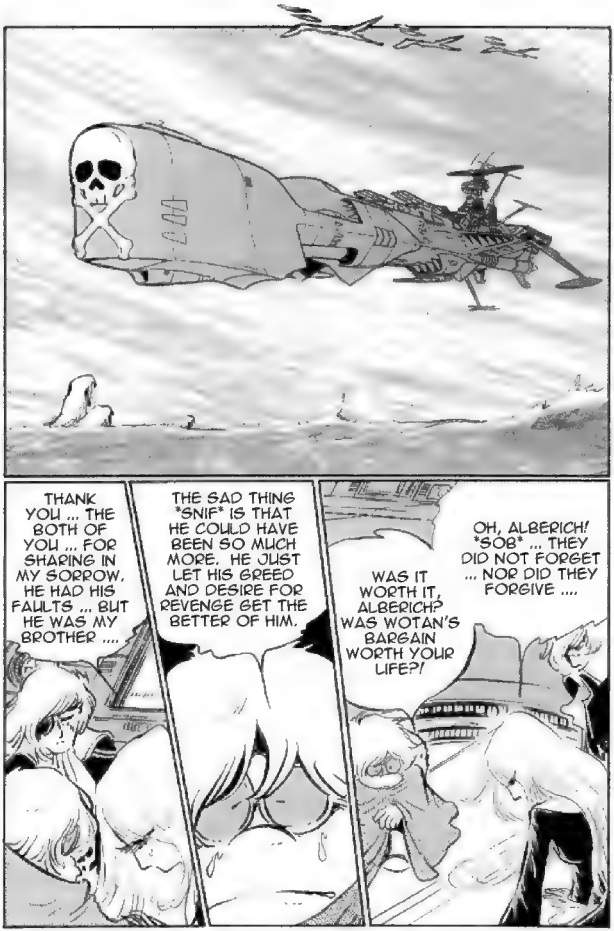


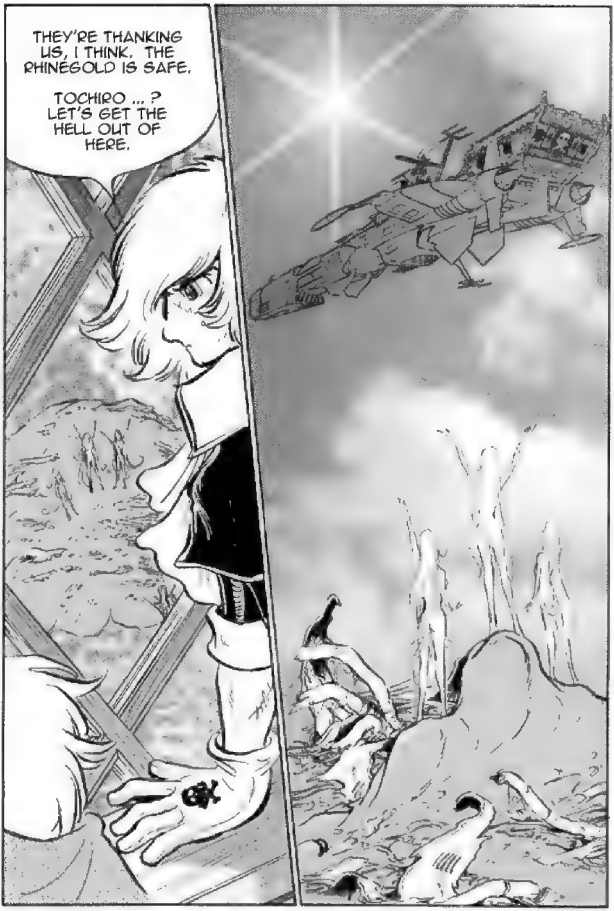
OH, THANK YOU!!!

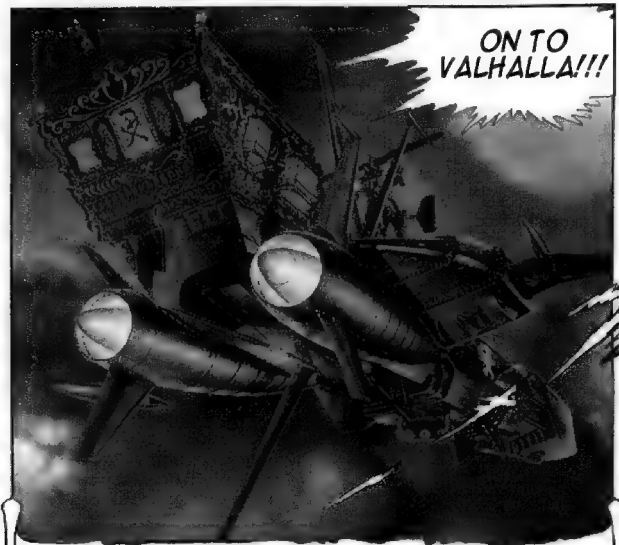

YES!
ALMOST!
A LITTLE MORE!
I'VE ALMOST GOT--
YAAGGH!!!

SPLASH!




THANK YOU ... THE BOTH OF YOU ... FOR SHARING IN MY SORROW. HE HAD HIS FAULTS ... BUT HE WAS MY BROTHER ....
THE SAD THING *SNIF* IS THAT HE COULD HAVE BEEN SO MUCH MORE. HE JUST LET HIS GREED AND DESIRE FOR REVENGE GET THE BETTER OF HIM.
WAS IT WORTH IT, ALBERICH? WAS WOTAN'S BARGAIN WORTH YOUR LIFE?!
OH, ALBERICH! *SOB* ... THEY DID NOT FORGET ... NOR DID THEY FORGIVE ....


THEY'RE THANKING US, I THINK. THE RHINEGOLD IS SAFE.
TOCHIRO ... ? LET'S GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE.



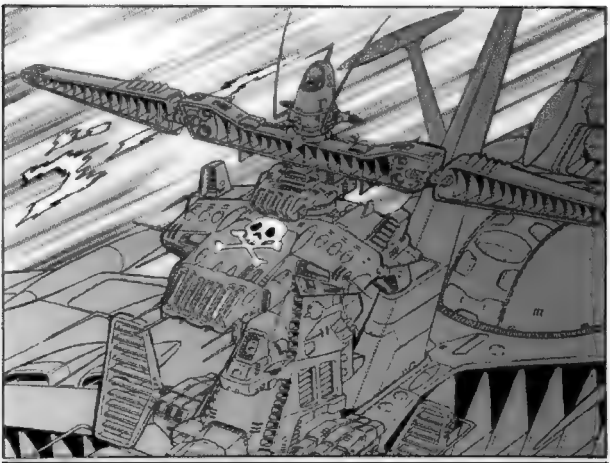
WOTAN FEARS THE RETURN OF CAPTAIN HARLOCK TO VALHALLA MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE IN THE UNIVERSE. HE NOW KNOWS THAT WHEN THIS HAPPENS, VALHALLA WILL FALL. HE IS STILL DETERMINED TO FIGHT THIS FATE, HOWEVER, AND WILL USE EVERY MEANS AT HIS DISPOSAL TO DO SO. LIKE THE FOOL THAT HE IS, HE STILL UNDERESTIMATES THE TRUE CAPACITY OF THE HUMANS WHO OPPOSE HIM ... AND WHO *WILL* ENCOMPASS HIS DOOM.

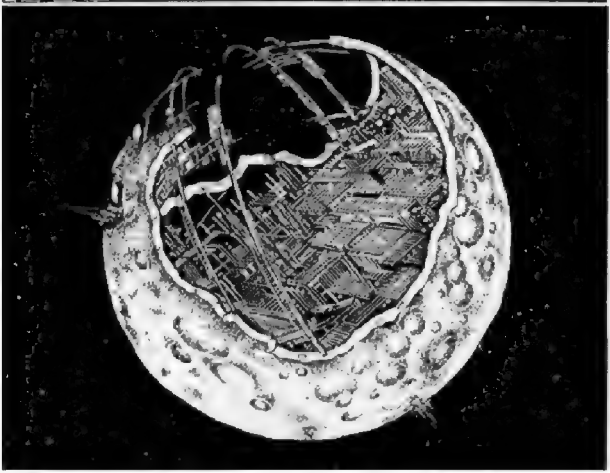
Götterdämmerung

Ring 70 : Wotan's Last Defender

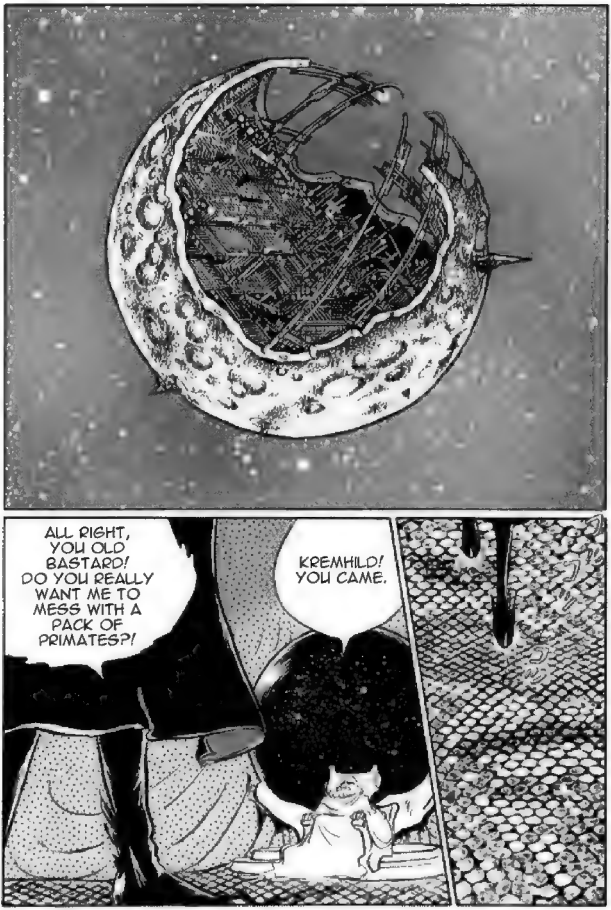
TOO LATE, WOTAN HAS COME TO THE REALIZATION THAT CAPTAIN HARLOCK'S DESTINY CANNOT BE THWARTED. ALL HE CAN DO NOW IS MAKE A LAST DESPERATE STAND, A LAST THROW OF THE DICE, DOING ALL THAT HE CAN TO FORESTALL THE DOOM OF VALHALLA. YET THE FLASH OF THE PLANET RHINE HAS ALREADY HERALDED WHAT IS TO COME ... AND LIKE THE DROWNING ALBERICH, WOTAN FIGHTS DESPERATELY FOR WHAT LITTLE TIME HE HAS LEFT.

ALBERICH ....
I THINK SO. AFTER ALL, SHE'S GOT US TO LEAN ON IF SHE NEEDS TO.
WILL MIIME BE ALL RIGHT?
YES ... MY SECOND HOME, MY ADOPTIVE FAMILY ...
... ONE THAT SHOWED MORE CARE AND LOVE FOR ME THAN MY BIRTH RELATIVES EVER DID. I CAN NEVER REPAY THE DEBT I OWE FOR THE PRIVILIGE OF BEING PART OF THIS SHIP.





ANOTHER PUPPET, OR SCAPEGOAT, OR SOMEONE OR SOMETHING ELSE TO PUT BETWEEN HIM AND US. THIS TIME, WE'RE GONNA BLOW RIGHT THROUGH THEM.
SO ... WHAT'S WOTAN GONNA THROW AT US NOW, EH?

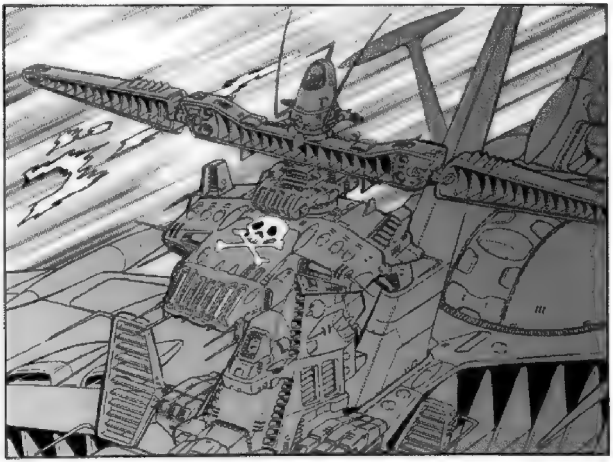

ALL RIGHT, YOU OLD BASTARD! DO YOU REALLY WANT ME TO MESS WITH A PACK OF PRIMATES?!
KREMHILD! YOU CAME.

GARBAGE! YES, THAT EXACTLY IT! ONLY THEY'VE PROVED TO BE QUITE A NUISANCE.
WHAT'S THE MATTER? NO ONE ELSE LEFT TO TAKE OUT YOUR GARBAGE?
NOT AFTER I'M THROUGH WITH THEM. HOWEVER, I WANT ALL OF THE SURVIVING VALKYRIES TO COME WITH ME. THEY NEED TO RELEARN DISCIPLINE.
A MOST EXCELLENT IDEA, MY INVINCIBLE KREMHILD!

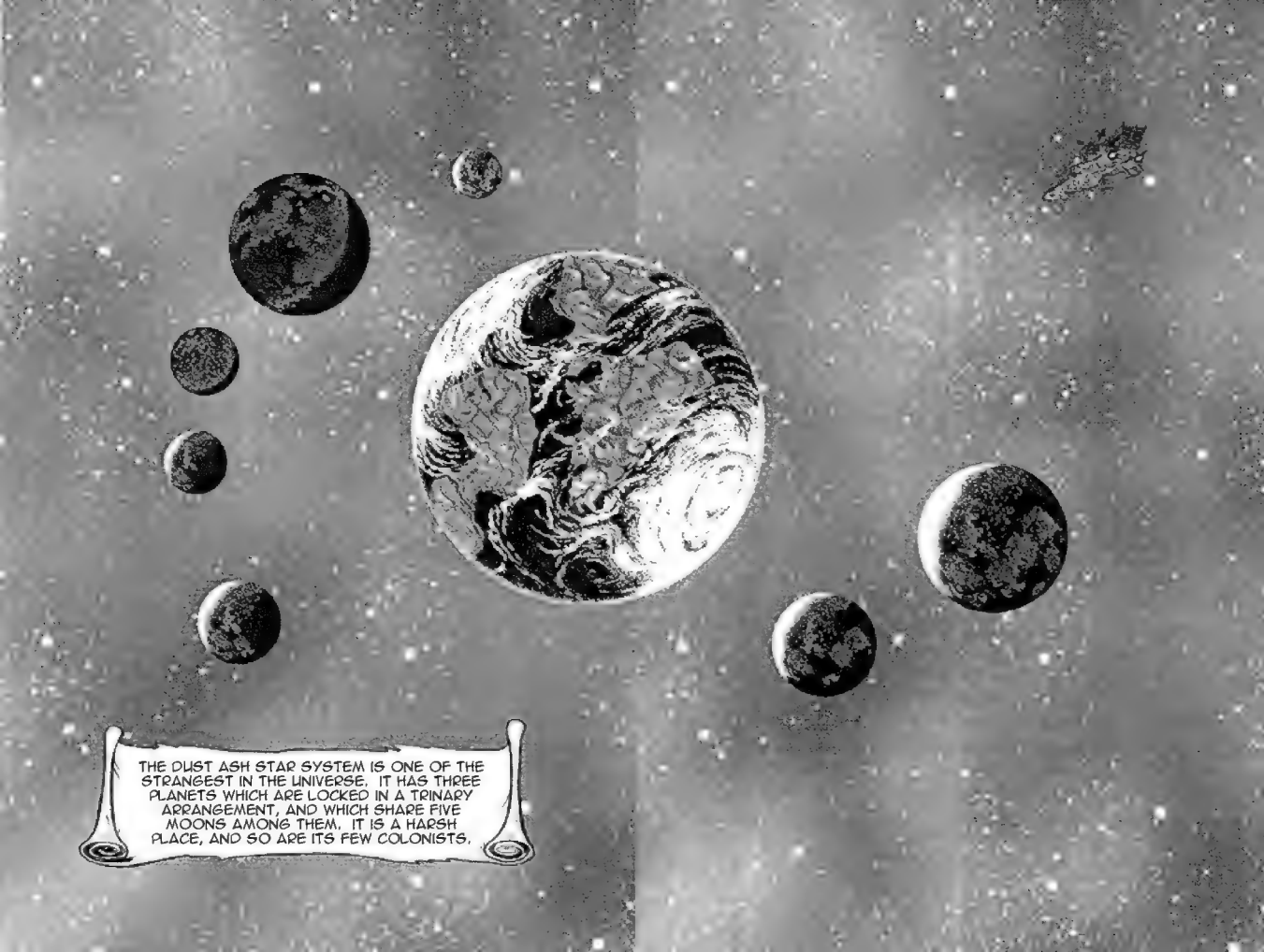
I WILL EITHER BURN THAT OUT OF THE OTHER VALKYRIES OR BURN THEM UP IN THE PROCESS! UNDERSTAND?
I INTEND TO PUSH THEM UNTIL THEY EITHER BURN BRIGHT OR BURN OUT! I HAVE NO NEED FOR SENTIMENTAL SHIT LIKE BRUNHILDE DISPLAYED! THAT WAS WHAT GOT HER KILLED!
KREMHILD ... HER LEGEND IS AS GREAT AMONG THE WOMEN WARRIORS OF VALHALLA AS THAT OF BRUNHILDE, ALBEIT FOR DIFFERENT REASONS. UNLIKE BRUNHILDE, KREMHILD HAS COMPLETELY BURIED ALL OF HER FEMININE ASPECTS BENEATH A ICE COLD SHELL OF AMORAL RUTHLESSNESS. SHE WAS NOT RESPECTED AS WAS BRUNHILDE. SHE WAS FEARED. SHE TOO HAS YET TO BE DEFEATED IN BATTLE ... HOWEVER ....

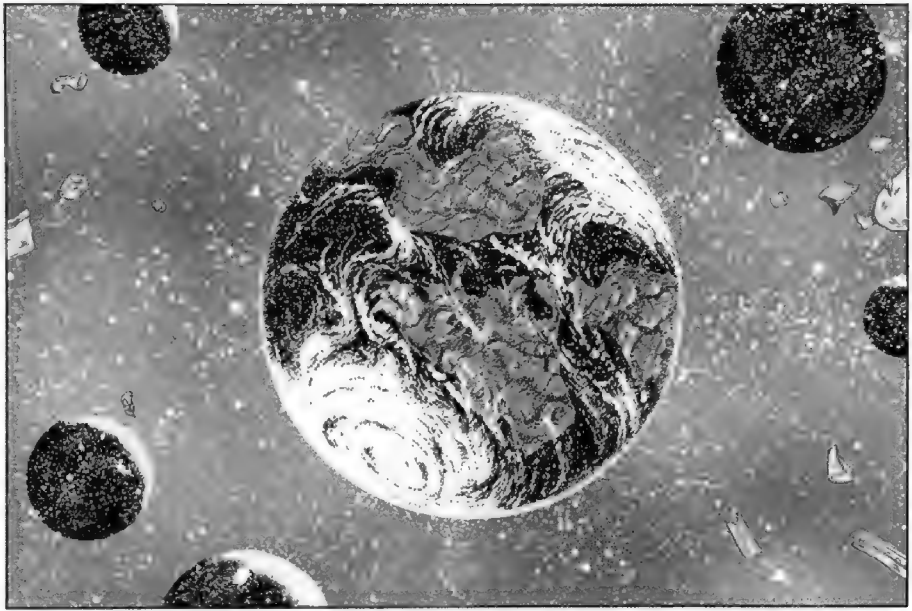
I THOUGHT HARLOCK WAS COMING STRAIGHT HERE ....
WHY WOULD HE STOP AT THE DUST ASH SYSTEM? IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.
I HEARD HARLOCK HAS SOME UNFINISHED BUSINESS THERE.
OH? WHAT KIND?
SOMEBODY THERE CALLED HIM A FOOL, THEN THEY CHALLENGED HIM.
A FOOL? WHY?
IT WAS ONE OF YOUR GOONS, OLD MAN. "HOW DARE HE CHALLENGE THE GODS!"

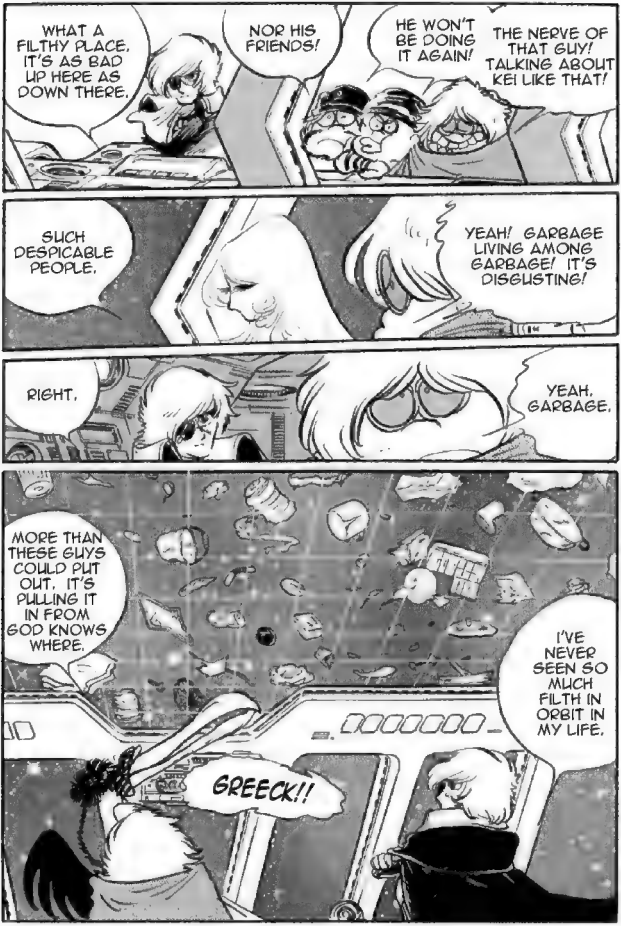
THAT FOOL APPARENTLY FORGOT ABOUT HARLOCK'S SENSE OF HONOR. HE MAY BE A PRIMATE, BUT HE'S A WARRIOR OF SORTS ALL THE SAME. HE CAN'T LET THAT KIND OF THING GO.
HE THEN WENT ON TO SPOUT ALL MANNER OF SLANDER AGAINST HARLOCK AND THE CREW OF THE ARCADIA - SUCH AS THEIR FIRST MATE, KEI YUKI, BEING THE CAPTAIN'S WHORE, AMONG OTHERS.

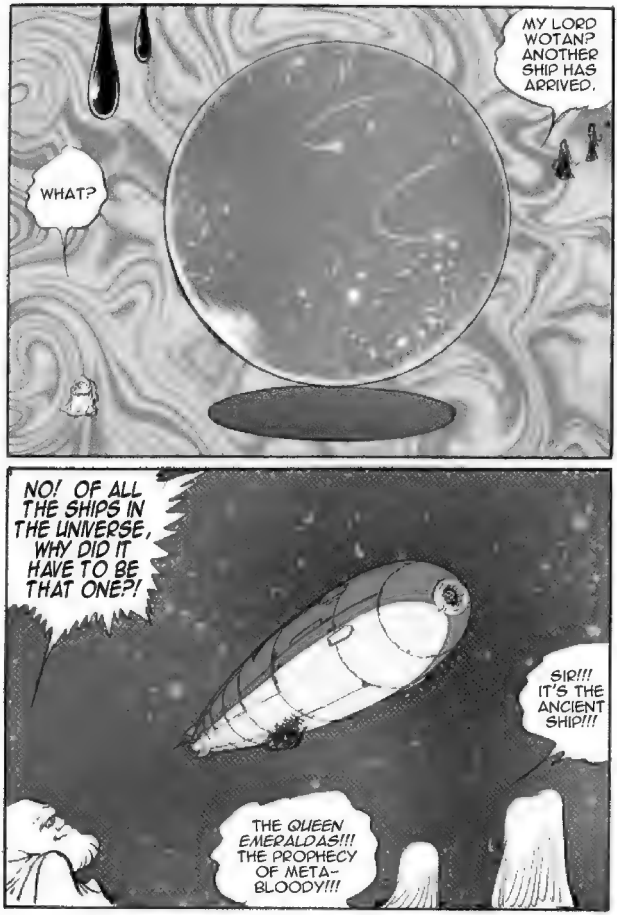


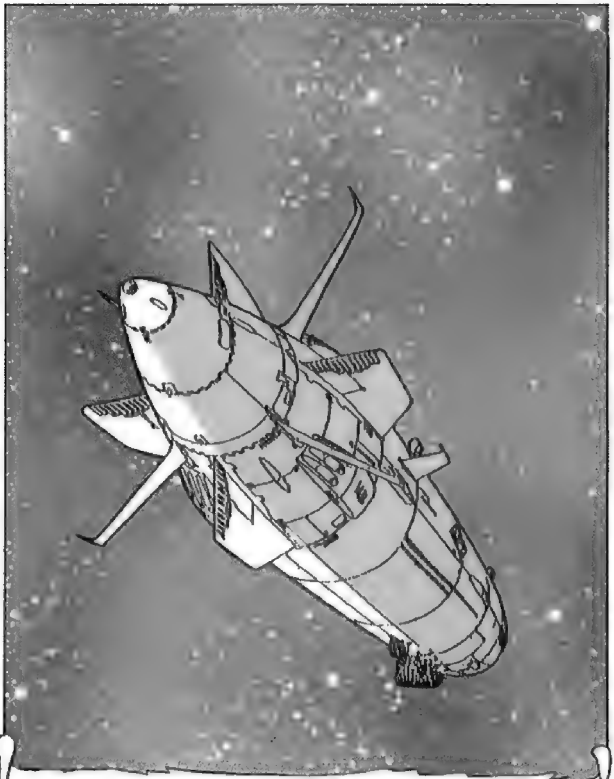
WHAT?!
I'D SAY YOUR MAN THERE IS PROBABLY GETTING THE SHIT BEATEN OUT OF HIM RIGHT ABOUT NOW.
THAT'S WHY THE PRIMATES HAVE STYMIED YOU THUS FAR, WOTAN ....
YOU DON'T TAKE THEIR CAPABILITIES INTO ACCOUNT. I WON'T MAKE THAT MISTAKE.
FINE! AND YOU CAN EAT SHIT AND DIE TOO, OLD MAN! NOW DO YOU WANT ME TO HELP YOU OR NOT?!
WATCH YOUR TONGUE! I WILL NOT BE INSULTED EVEN BY THE LIKES OF YOU, KREMHILD!
HARLOCK IS AN ADVERSARY WORTHY OF RESPECT. BY NOT GIVING HIM HIS DUE, YOU KEEP FUCKING THINGS UP.
AS YOUR OWN DAUGHTER TRIED TO TELL YOU, WOTAN ...


THE DUST ASH STAR SYSTEM IS ONE OF THE STRANGEST IN THE UNIVERSE. IT HAS THREE PLANETS WHICH ARE LOCKED IN A TRINARY ARRANGEMENT, AND WHICH SHARE FIVE MOONS AMONG THEM. IT IS A HARSH PLACE, AND SO ARE ITS FEW COLONISTS.

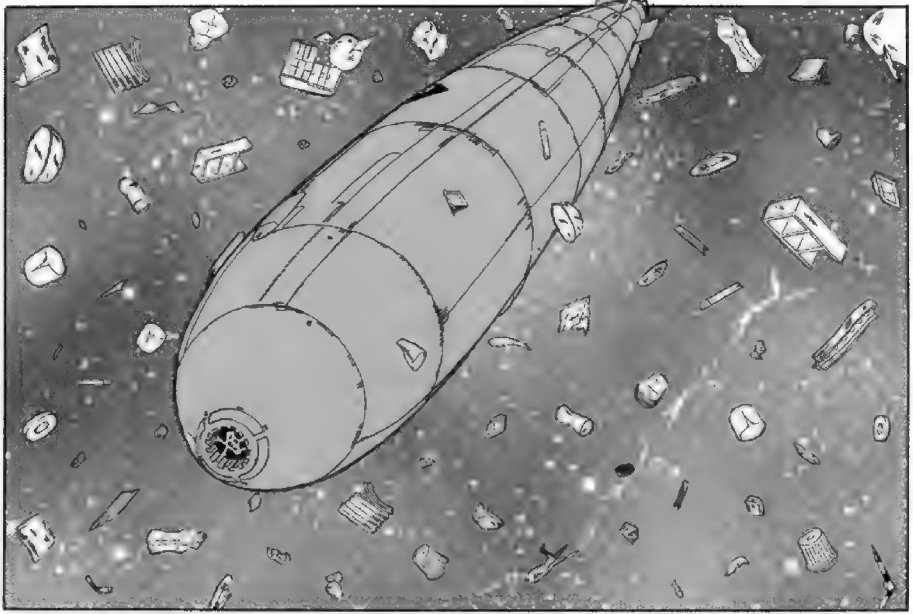



WHAT A FILTHY PLACE. IT'S AS BAD UP HERE AS DOWN THERE.
NOR HIS FRIENDS!
HE WON'T BE DOING IT AGAIN!
THE NERVE OF THAT GUY! TALKING ABOUT KEI LIKE THAT!
SUCH DESPICABLE PEOPLE.
YEAH! GARBAGE LIVING AMONG GARBAGE! IT'S DISGUSTING!
RIGHT.
YEAH. GARBAGE.
MORE THAN THESE GUYS COULD PUT OUT. IT'S PULLING IT IN FROM GOD KNOWS WHERE.
I'VE NEVER SEEN SO MUCH FILTH IN ORBIT IN MY LIFE.
GREECK!!


MY LORD WOTAN? ANOTHER SHIP HAS ARRIVED.
WHAT?
NO! OF ALL THE SHIPS IN THE UNIVERSE, WHY DID IT HAVE TO BE THAT ONE?!
SIR!!! IT'S THE ANCIENT SHIP!!!
THE QUEEN EMERALDAS!!! THE PROPHECY OF META-BLOODY!!!

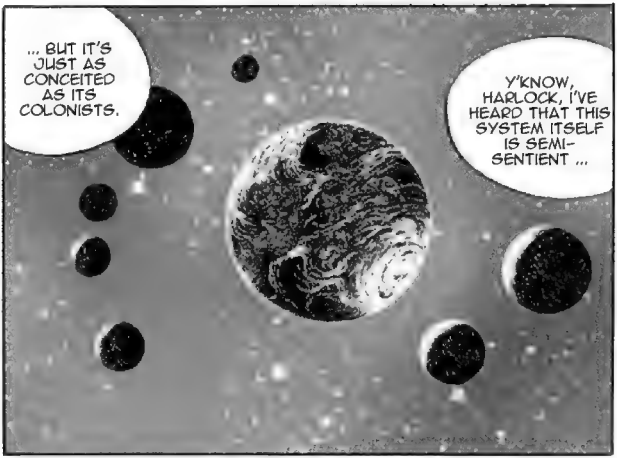


"WHEN YOU SEE ME IN THE SKIES ABOVE VALHALLA, THEN THE DOOM OF THE GODS IS AT HAND." SO PROPHESIED THE *QUEEN EMERALDAS* WHEN IT SENT WOTAN'S MESSENGER BACK AFTER THWARTING HER ATTEMPT TO KILL HARLOCK AND TOCHIRO IN THEIR YOUTH. NOW IT JOINS THE *ARCADIA* AT THE DUST ASH SYSTEM, NOT FAR FROM THE GATEWAY TO VALHALLA ITSELF. THE DOOM OF THE GODS DRAWS NIGH, EVEN AS WAS FORETOLD ....

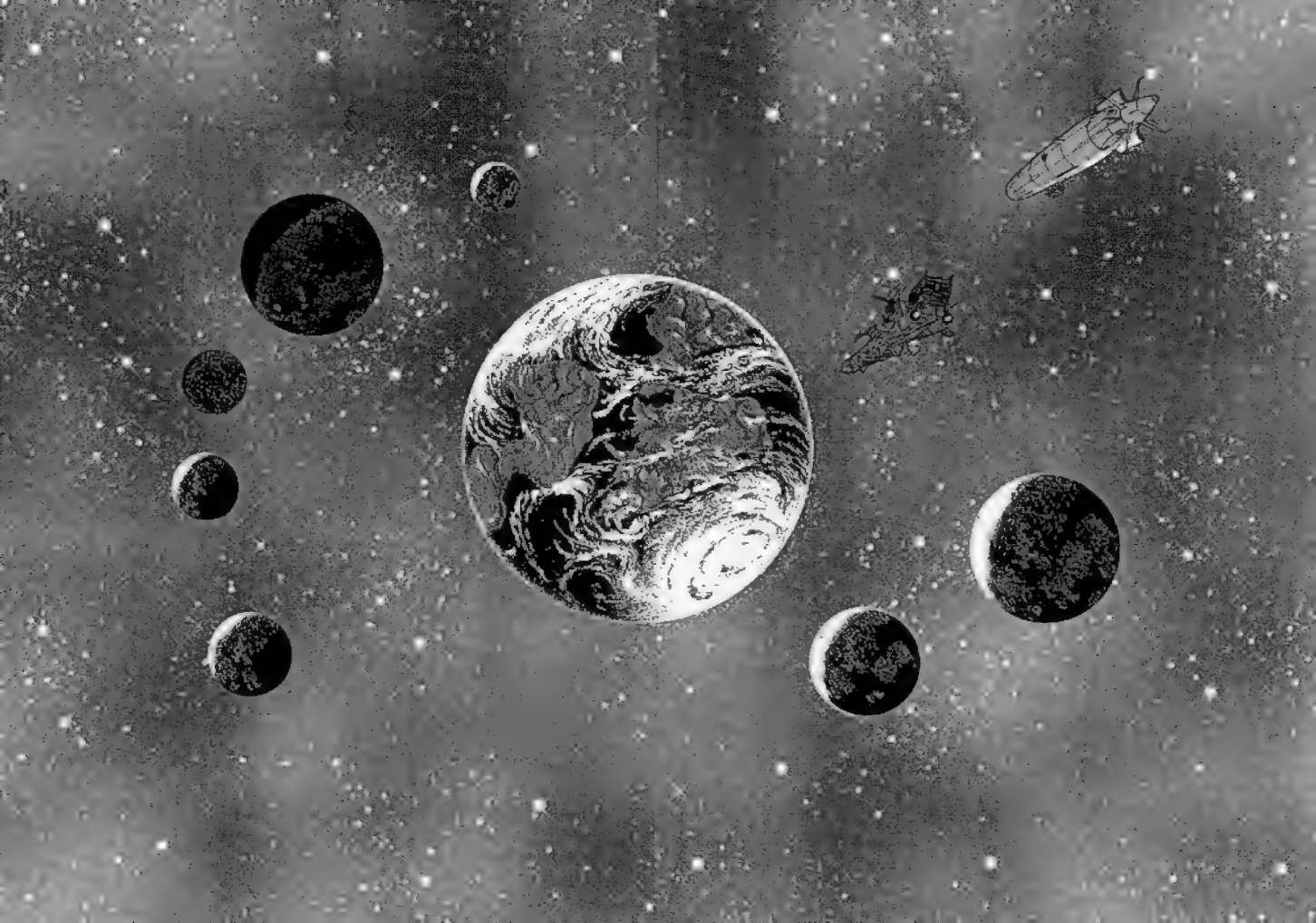


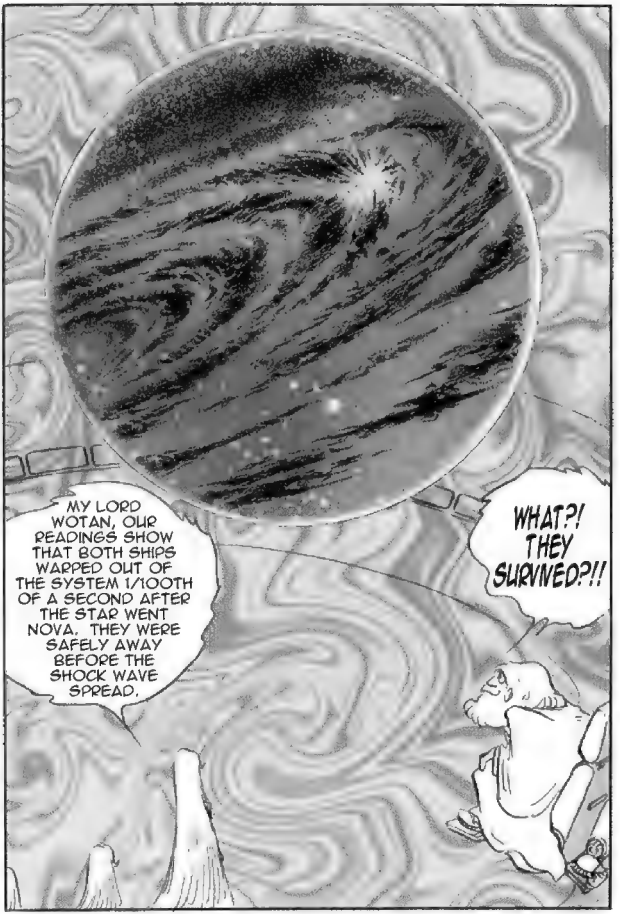
HARLOCK? TOCHIRO? THIS IS EMERALDAS. I GOT YOUR MESSAGE. SO, WE'RE GOING TO VALHALLA.
... AND ITS GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN. I'VE MISSED YOU.
YES! THANKS FOR THE WARP JUMP DATA* YOU COLLECTED EARLIER ...
THEY'RE JUST AS ARROGANT AS THEIR BOSS -- I MEAN WERE, NOT ANY MORE!
SORRY FOR THE DELAY. WE HAD TO DEAL WITH SOME OF WOTAN'S SMARTASSES ON ONE OF THE MOONS.
WATCH THE GRAVITY FIELDS HERE, EMERALDAS. THEY'RE PULLING IN GARBAGE FROM PARSECS AWAY.
THEY'RE AS IMPOSSIBLE AS THIS SYSTEM.

(*) THE VALKYRIE PART 2, RING 10, "FREYA"

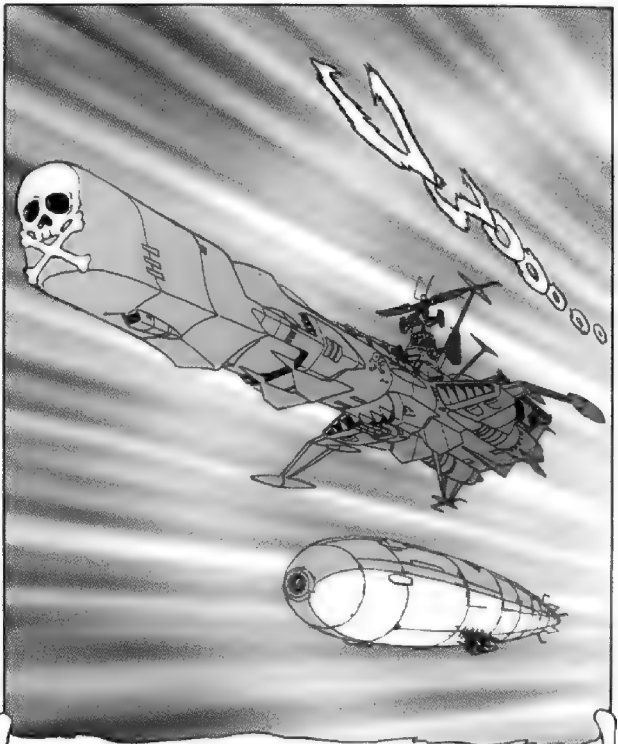

... BUT IT'S JUST AS CONCEITED AS ITS COLONISTS.
Y'KNOW, HARLOCK, I'VE HEARD THAT THIS SYSTEM ITSELF IS SEMI-SENTIENT ...

PERHAPS IT'S TIME THAT THE SUN OF DUST ASH WENT SUPERNOVA!
IS THAT SO, LITTLE MONKEY? WELL, IT'S TIME TO PUT YOU IN YOUR PLACE!




MY LORD WOTAN, OUR READINGS SHOW THAT BOTH SHIPS WARPED OUT OF THE SYSTEM 1/100TH OF A SECOND AFTER THE STAR WENT NOVA. THEY WERE SAFELY AWAY BEFORE THE SHOCK WAVE SPREAD.
WHAT?! THEY SURVIVED?!!

DAMN THEM! EVERY TIME I TRY TO KILL THEM, THEY SOMEHOW ESCAPE!!!
WOTAN ...
YOU ARE A MORON.
DID YOU HONESTLY THINK THAT THOSE TWO SHIPS COULDN'T ESCAPE SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
YOUR LATE HUSBAND -- NOW THERE WAS A MORON! ALWAYS TRYING TO STEAL THE RHINEGOLD, ALWAYS OBSESSED WITH IT --
I AM NOT A MORON! I AM THE LORD OF VALHALLA!!
PERHAPS, AS I SAID BEFORE, IF YOU SHOWED THE PROPER RESPECT FOR YOUR FOES, THEN YOU MIGHT DEFEAT THEM!
DON'T CHANGE THE SUBJECT! BESIDES, HE WAS MY MATE BY NEED, NOT BY CHOICE.



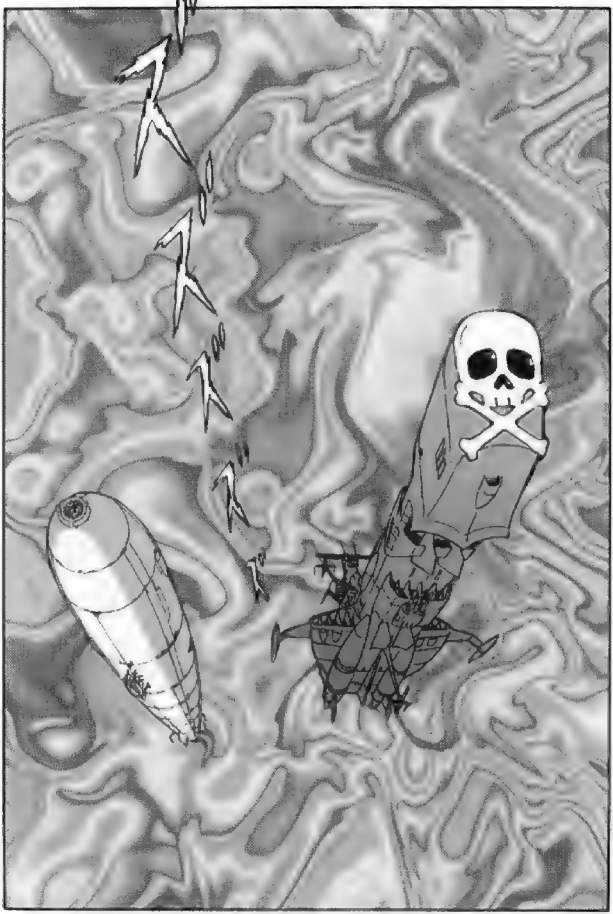
THERE ARE MANY TIMES IN LIFE WHERE ONE CAN BECOME INDIGNANT AT AN INSULT. IF INSULTED ENOUGH, THIS CAN LEAD TO THE RUIN OF THE INSULTER. WOTAN'S GOONS LEARNED THIS LESSON TOO LATE. WOTAN HAS NEVER LEARNED IT AND NEVER WILL. THIS IS BUT ONE OF THE MANY WAYS THAT HE HAS SET THE STAGE FOR HIS OWN DOWNFALL. SADLY, ONCE HE GOES DOWN, HE WILL TAKE THE REST OF VALHALLA WITH HIM, AND THE OLD GODS WILL BE NO MORE.

Götterdämmerung

Ring 71 : The Arrival of Kremhild

BOTH VALHALLA AND DUST ASH SHARED TWO THINGS IN COMMON. BOTH WERE IMMERSED IN GARBAGE. THAT OF DUST ASH WAS MOSTLY PHYSICAL, WHEREAS THAT OF VALHALLA WAS MOSTLY MENTAL. BOTH WERE ALSO DOOMED TO DESTRUCTION. THE END FOR DUST ASH WAS SWIFT, AND SOME MIGHT EVEN SAY MERCIFUL. VALHALLA IS NOT TO BE SO FORTUNATE -- AND THE FAULT FOR THIS LIES SQUARELY WITH WOTAN HIMSELF.

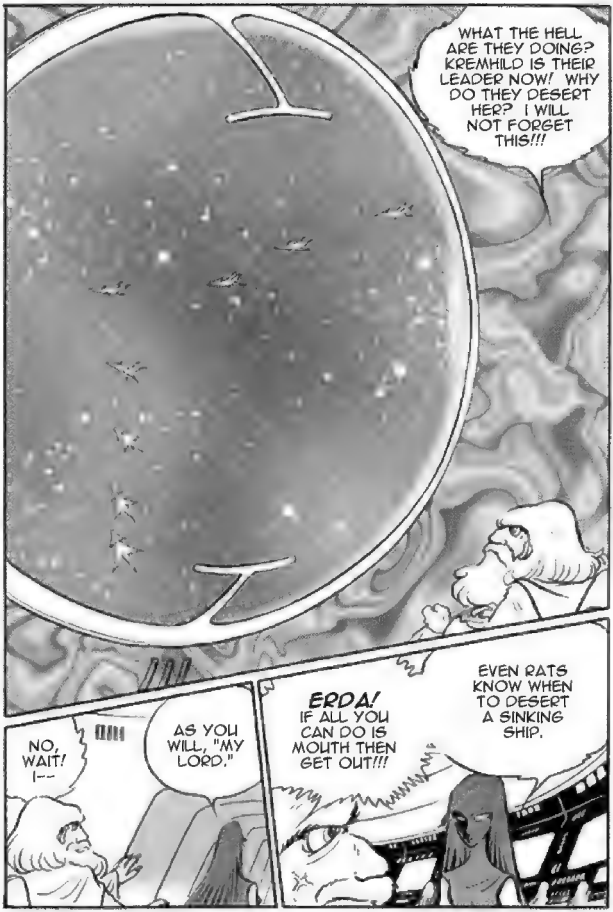
WHATEVER. I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO KNOW THAT I'VE UNLEASHED KREMHILD ON THE HUMANS.
I DO NOT COME AT YOUR BIDDING. IT MERELY AMUSES ME TO HUMOR YOU.
YOU CALLED, WOTAN?
ERDA. SO KIND OF YOU TO HEED ME FOR ONCE.
IT WILL DO YOU NO GOOD. SHE WILL FARE NO BETTER AGAINST THEM THAN DID MY DAUGHTER BRUNHILDE.
MY DAUGHTER, ERDA! AND I PUT KREMHILD IN CHARGE OF THE VALKYRIES!! SHE LEADS THEM NOW!!!
YOU HAVE JUST ASSURED HER DEATH. EXCUSE ME. I MUST PREPARE FOR WHAT IS TO COME.



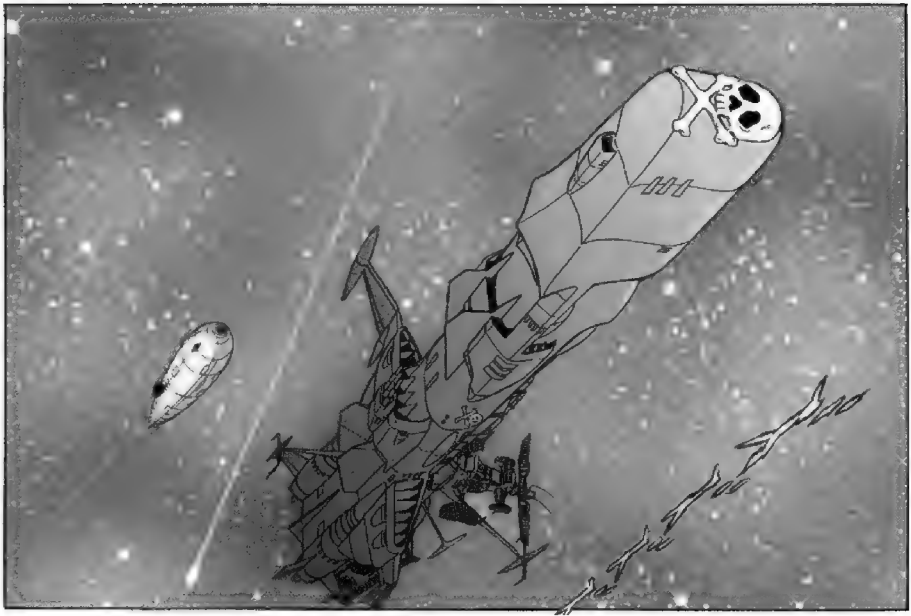
I'LL PUT THE IMAGE ON THE VIDEO PANEL.
NINE OBJECTS JUST CAME THROUGH THE GATE TO VALHALLA, SIR.
WHAT IS IT, TADASHI?
WELL, WELL ...
PROBABLY THEIR NEW LEADER. IT'S LARGER AND BRIGHTER THAN THE OTHERS.
THE FOUR ON EACH WING ARE THE VALKYRIES, BUT I DO NOT RECOGNIZE THE VESSEL IN THE LEAD.

THE OTHERS HAVE PEELED OFF -- ONLY THEIR LEADER IS ADVANCING!
WHAT TH--?!

IT IS THE MARK OF A GOOD WARRIOR TO RESPECT THE CAPABILITIES OF YOUR OPPONENT, NO MATTER WHAT YOU MAY THINK OF THEM AS A PERSON. KREMHILD IS SUCH A WARRIOR. SHE KNOWS EVERYTHING THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT HARLOCK AND THE *ARCADIA*. THUS, SHE BELIEVES HERSELF PREPARED FOR HIM. NOW FOR THE OTHER ....


WHAT THE HELL ARE THEY DOING? KREMHILD IS THEIR LEADER NOW! WHY DO THEY DESERT HER? I WILL NOT FORGET THIS!!!
ERDA! IF ALL YOU CAN DO IS MOUTH THEN GET OUT!!!
EVEN RATS KNOW WHEN TO DESERT A SINKING SHIP.
AS YOU WILL, "MY LORD."
NO, WAIT! I--

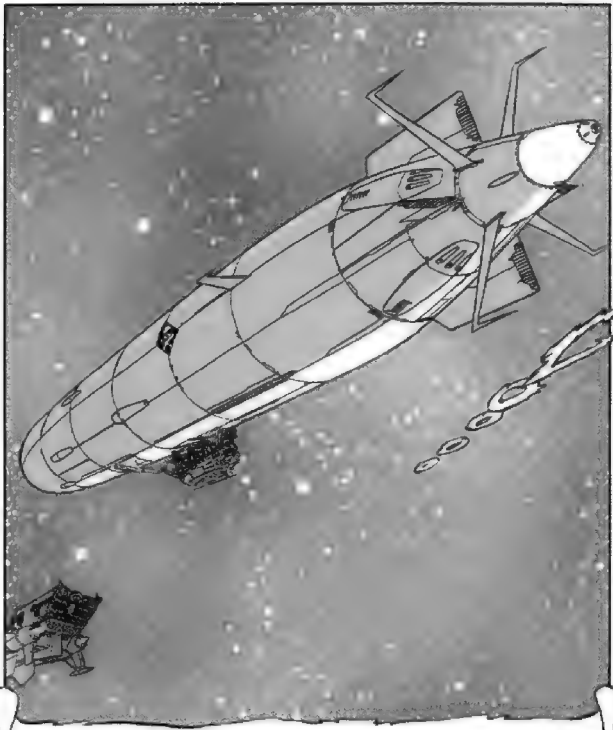
NOW, IF THERE IS ANY WAY TO NEVER COME BACK AGAIN BEFORE THE END, I WILL NOT. FAREWELL, "LORD OF VALHALLA." SAVE YOURSELF IF YOU CAN. GOODBYE ... AND GOOD RIDDANCE.
I SAID ONCE BEFORE THAT I WOULD NOT COME BACK, BUT EVENTS DECREED OTHERWISE.



IF EITHER ONE OF US TRIES TO SHOOT AT HER, WE'LL HIT EACH OTHER, CLASSIC! THIS NEW GIRL IS GOOOOD ...
WHOEVER THIS IS, THEY'RE PRETTY SHARP.

THE VALKYRIES LET WHOEVER THIS IS APPROACH ALONE. THAT IS NOT LIKE THEM, HARLOCK.
HEY, YEAH! YOU'RE RIGHT, MIIME.
SHE'S SIGNALING THE QUEEN EMERALDAS TO COME ABOARD IN TOKEN OF PARLEY.
NO MATTER WHAT SHE MIGHT DO, WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE TIME TO GET OUT OF THE WAY.
HARLOCK, I'VE SET OUR TIME SWEEPER TO MAKE A DELAY BARRIER BETWEEN HER SHIP AND OURS.
I WONDER WHY SHE WANTED TO TALK WITH EMERALDAS?
AT LEAST ON HER FIRST SHOT. THIS COULD GET INTERESTING.

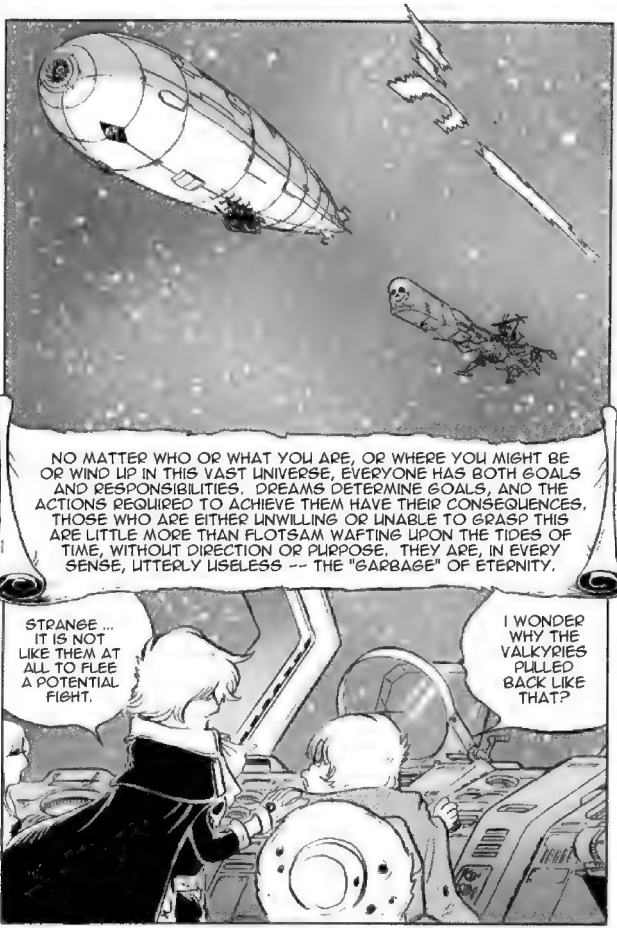
YOU MAY COME ABOARD, KREMHILD -- BUT BE ADVISED THAT I AM WATCHING YOUR EVERY MOVE. DO NOT TRY ANYTHING.

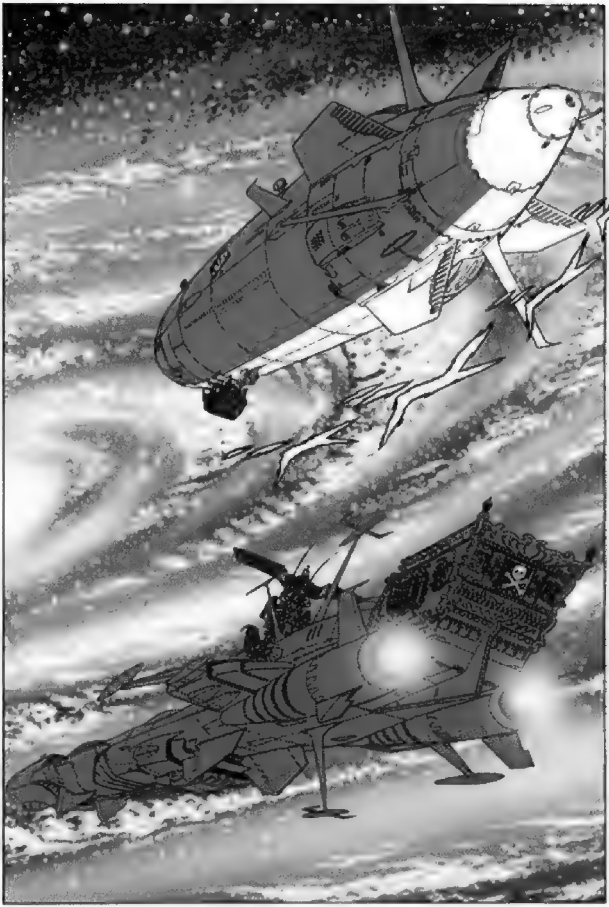


WHY DOES KREMHILD WANT TO TALK TO EMERALDAS? THAT CONVERSATION WOULD REMAIN PRIVATE TO THEM BOTH, AND EMERALDAS NEVER SPOKE OF IT TO ANYONE ELSE IN LATER DAYS. IT WAS MORE THAN SIMPLE "WOMEN'S PSYCHOLOGY," THOUGH. NEITHER HARLOCK NOR TOCHIRO, AND NOT EVEN WOTAN WOULD EVER UNDERSTAND THE REASON. THE ONLY ONE ON BOARD THE *ARCADIA* WHO MIGHT WAS MIIME, LAST SURVIVOR OF THE NIBELUNGEN CLAN.

Götterdämmerung

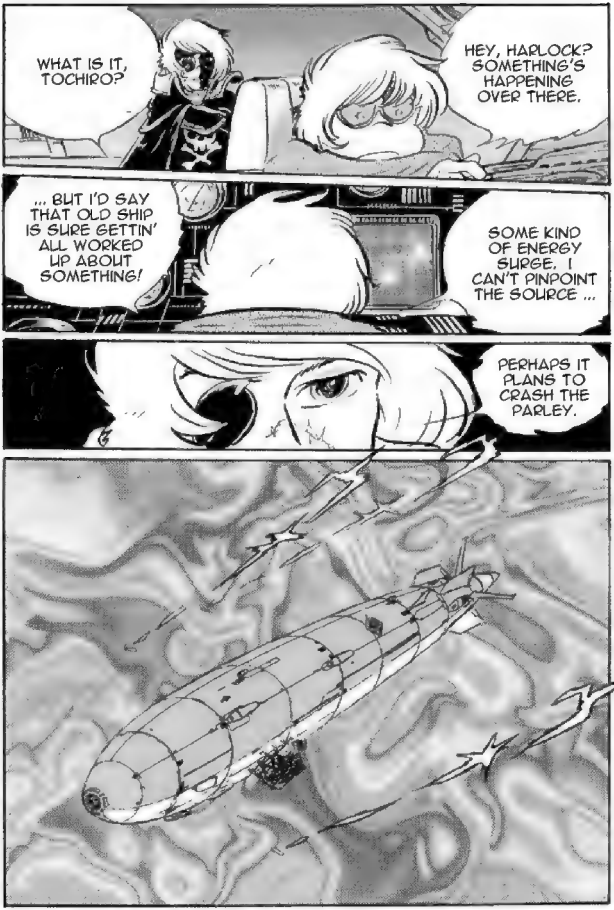
Ring 72 : Kremhild and Emeraldas

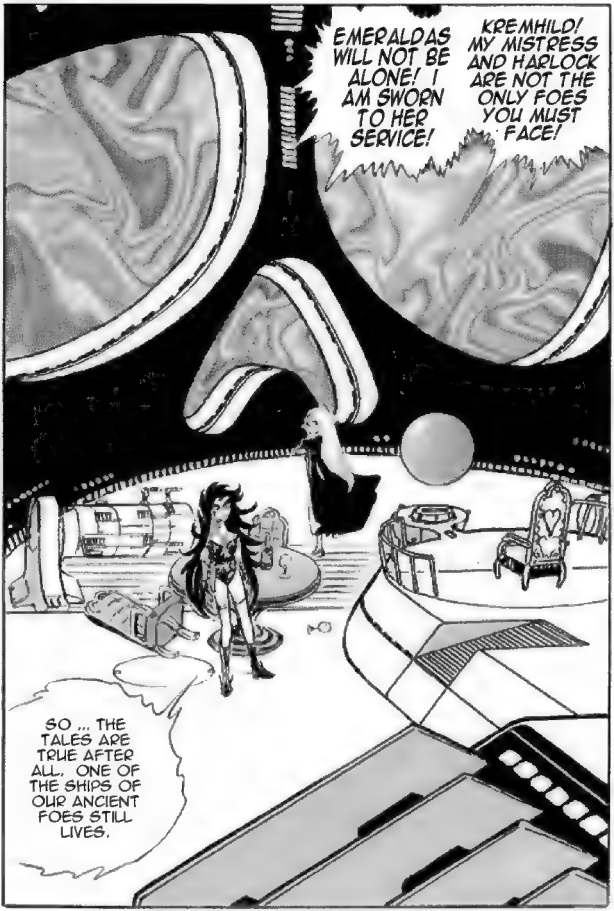

NO MATTER WHO OR WHAT YOU ARE, OR WHERE YOU MIGHT BE OR WIND UP IN THIS VAST UNIVERSE, EVERYONE HAS BOTH GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES. DREAMS DETERMINE GOALS, AND THE ACTIONS REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE THEM HAVE THEIR CONSEQUENCES. THOSE WHO ARE EITHER UNWILLING OR UNABLE TO GRASP THIS ARE LITTLE MORE THAN FLOTSAM WAFTING UPON THE TIDES OF TIME, WITHOUT DIRECTION OR PURPOSE. THEY ARE, IN EVERY SENSE, UTTERLY USELESS -- THE "GARBAGE" OF ETERNITY.
STRANGE ... IT IS NOT LIKE THEM AT ALL TO FLEE A POTENTIAL FIGHT.
I WONDER WHY THE VALKYRIES PULLED BACK LIKE THAT?



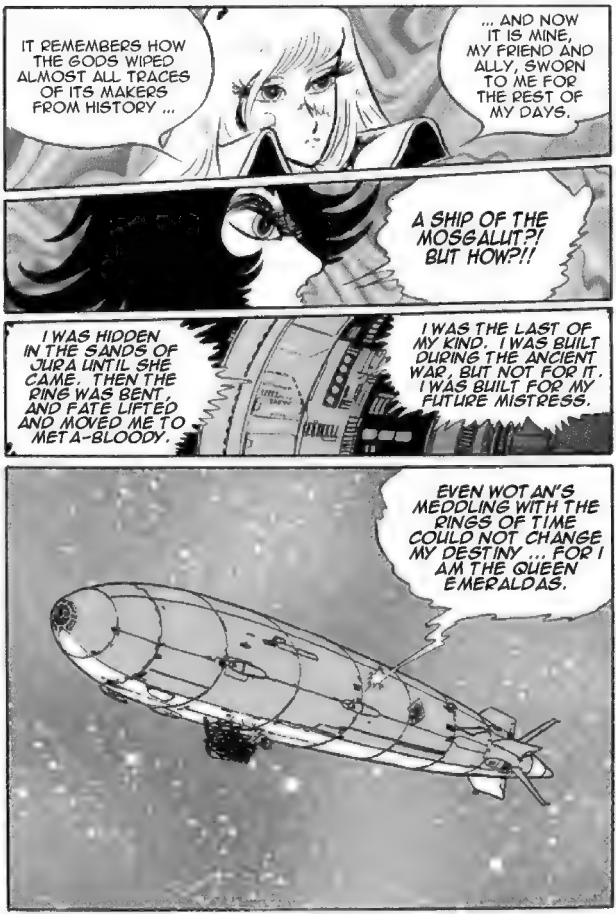
I THINK I KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON OVER THERE. CALL IT A ... "WOMAN'S THING."
OH, *THAT!* I GET IT. GUESS WE'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THE'RE DONE.

THANK YOU FOR SEEING ME.
A MOST EXCELLENT VINTAGE.
KREMHILD ...
WHAT IS IT THAT YOU WANT FROM ME?
NOTHING. I JUST WANTED TO SEE YOUR FACE BEFORE I KILLED YOU.
I HAVE SEEN HARLOCK AND HIS CREW, IN ANOTHER TIME AND PLACE, BUT NOT YOU.
SO, IN YOUR MIND'S EYE, YOU'VE ALREADY DEFEATED US. SOME MIGHT CALL SUCH A THING OVERCONFIDENCE.
I CALL IT BEING A FOOL.

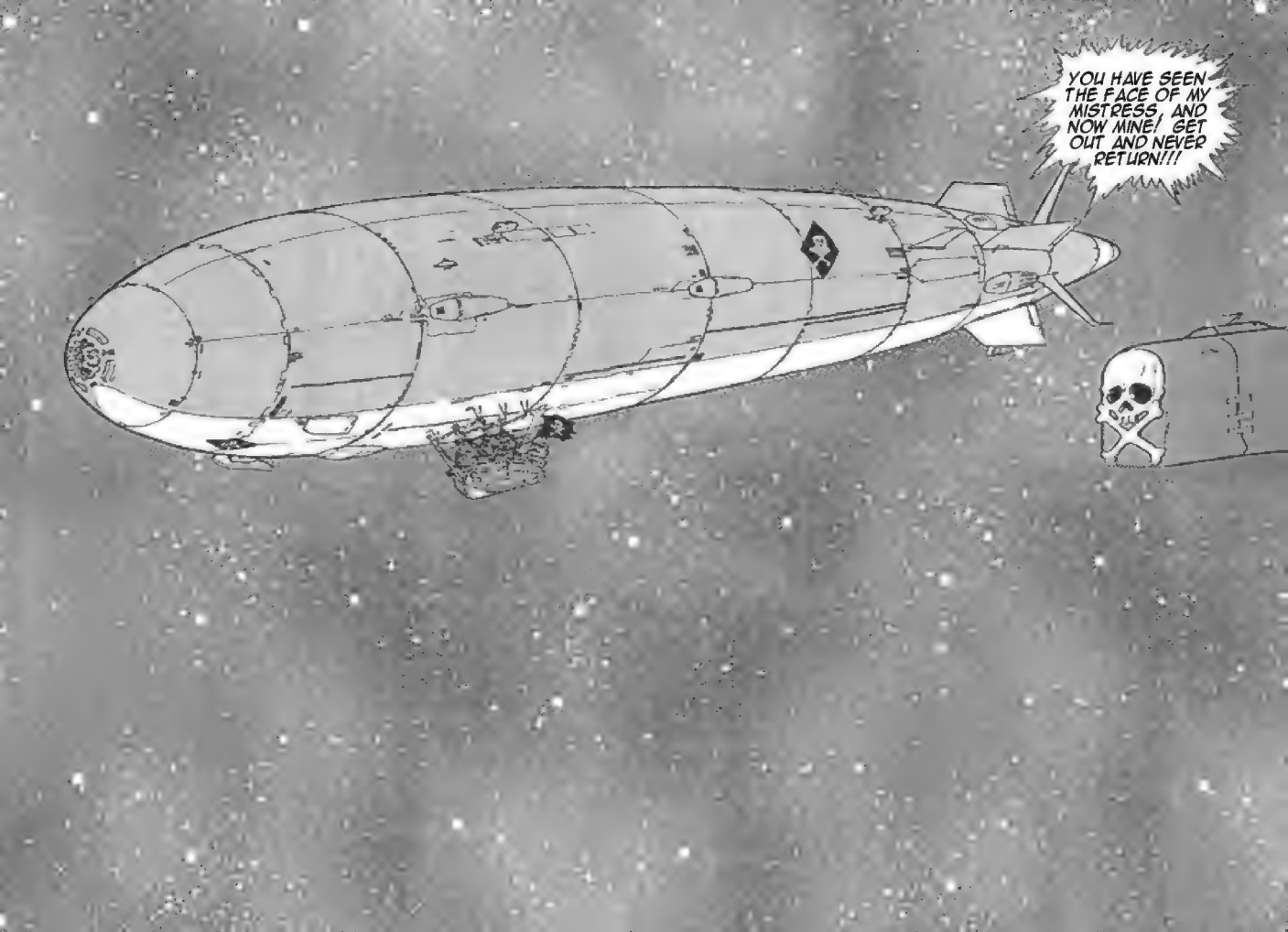

WHAT IS IT, TOCHIRO?
HEY, HARLOCK? SOMETHING'S HAPPENING OVER THERE.
... BUT I'D SAY THAT OLD SHIP IS SURE GETTIN' ALL WORKED UP ABOUT SOMETHING!
SOME KIND OF ENERGY SURGE. I CAN'T PINPOINT THE SOURCE ...
PERHAPS IT PLANS TO CRASH THE PARLEY.


KREMHILD! MY MISTRESS AND HARLOCK ARE NOT THE ONLY FOES YOU MUST FACE!
EMERALDAS WILL NOT BE ALONE! I AM SWORN TO HER SERVICE!
SO ... THE TALES ARE TRUE AFTER ALL. ONE OF THE SHIPS OF OUR ANCIENT FOES STILL LIVES.

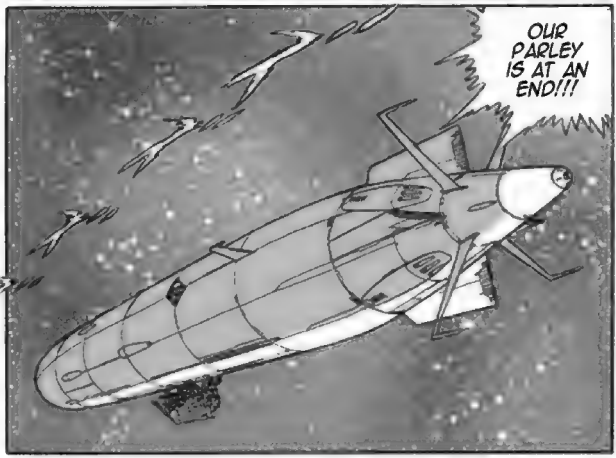
DOES THAT SURPRISE YOU, KREMHILD? FOR I WAS FATED TO SURVIVE THE ANCIENT WAR.
OH, YES -- IT MOST CERTAINLY CAN. THIS IS ONE OF THE ANCIENT INTELLIGENT SHIPS OF THE MOSEALUT. THE ONLY ONE STILL IN EXISTENCE, AS A MATTER OF FACT.
NO ... THAT CANNOT BE!

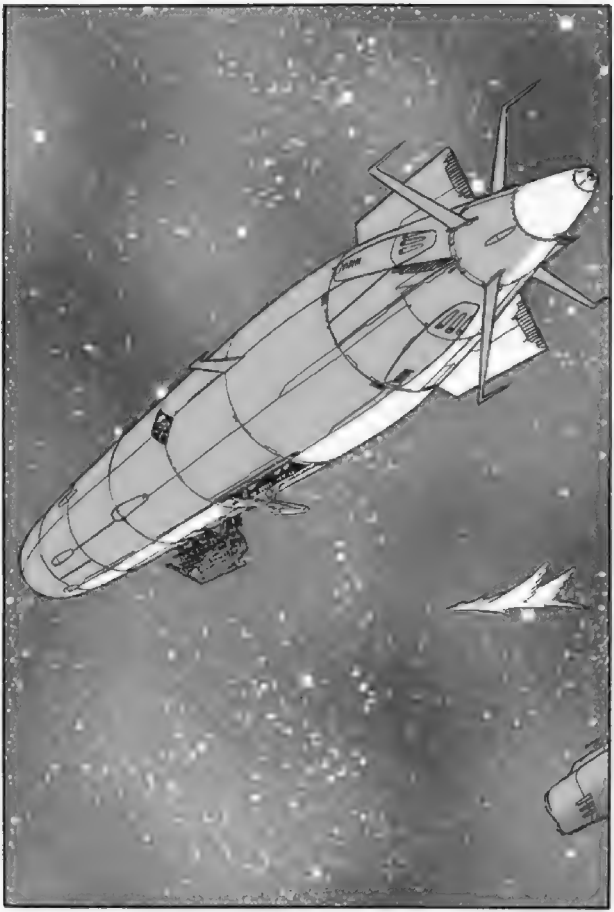

IT REMEMBERS HOW THE GODS WIPED ALMOST ALL TRACES OF ITS MAKERS FROM HISTORY ...
... AND NOW IT IS MINE, MY FRIEND AND ALLY, SWORN TO ME FOR THE REST OF MY DAYS.
A SHIP OF THE MOSGALUT?! BUT HOW?!!
I WAS HIDDEN IN THE SANDS OF JURA UNTIL SHE CAME. THEN THE RING WAS BENT, AND FATE LIFTED AND MOVED ME TO META-BLOODY.
I WAS THE LAST OF MY KIND. I WAS BUILT DURING THE ANCIENT WAR, BUT NOT FOR IT. I WAS BUILT FOR MY FUTURE MISTRESS.
EVEN WOT AN'S MEDDLING WITH THE RINGS OF TIME COULD NOT CHANGE MY DESTINY ... FOR I AM THE QUEEN EMERALDAS.

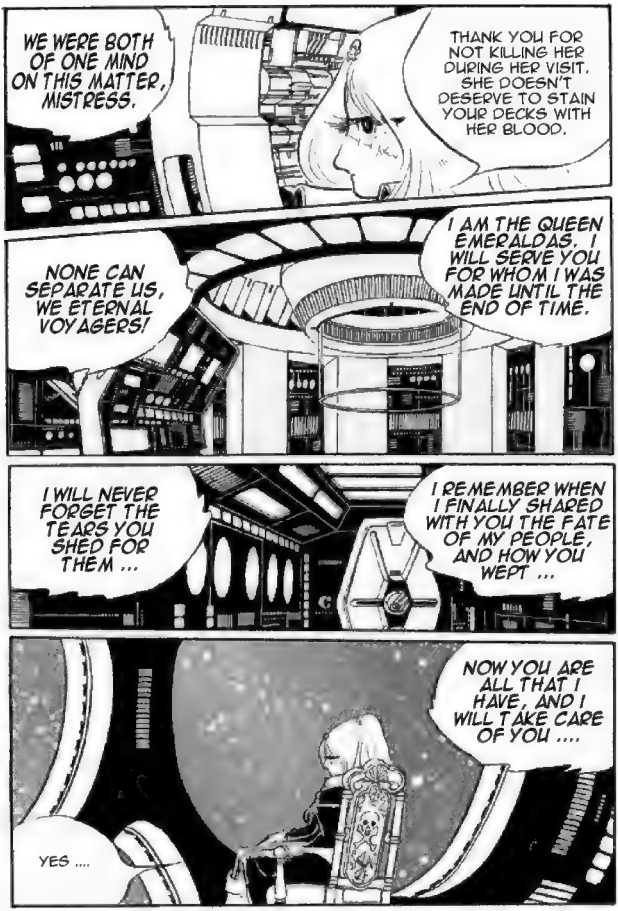
I HAVE NO PATIENCE FOR THE HUNTING DOGS OF VALHALLA! NOW GO!!!
NOW LEAVE, FOOL! DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MUCH OF A THREAT I AM TO YOU?!


YOU HAVE SEEN THE FACE OF MY MISTRESS, AND NOW MINE! GET OUT AND NEVER RETURN!!!

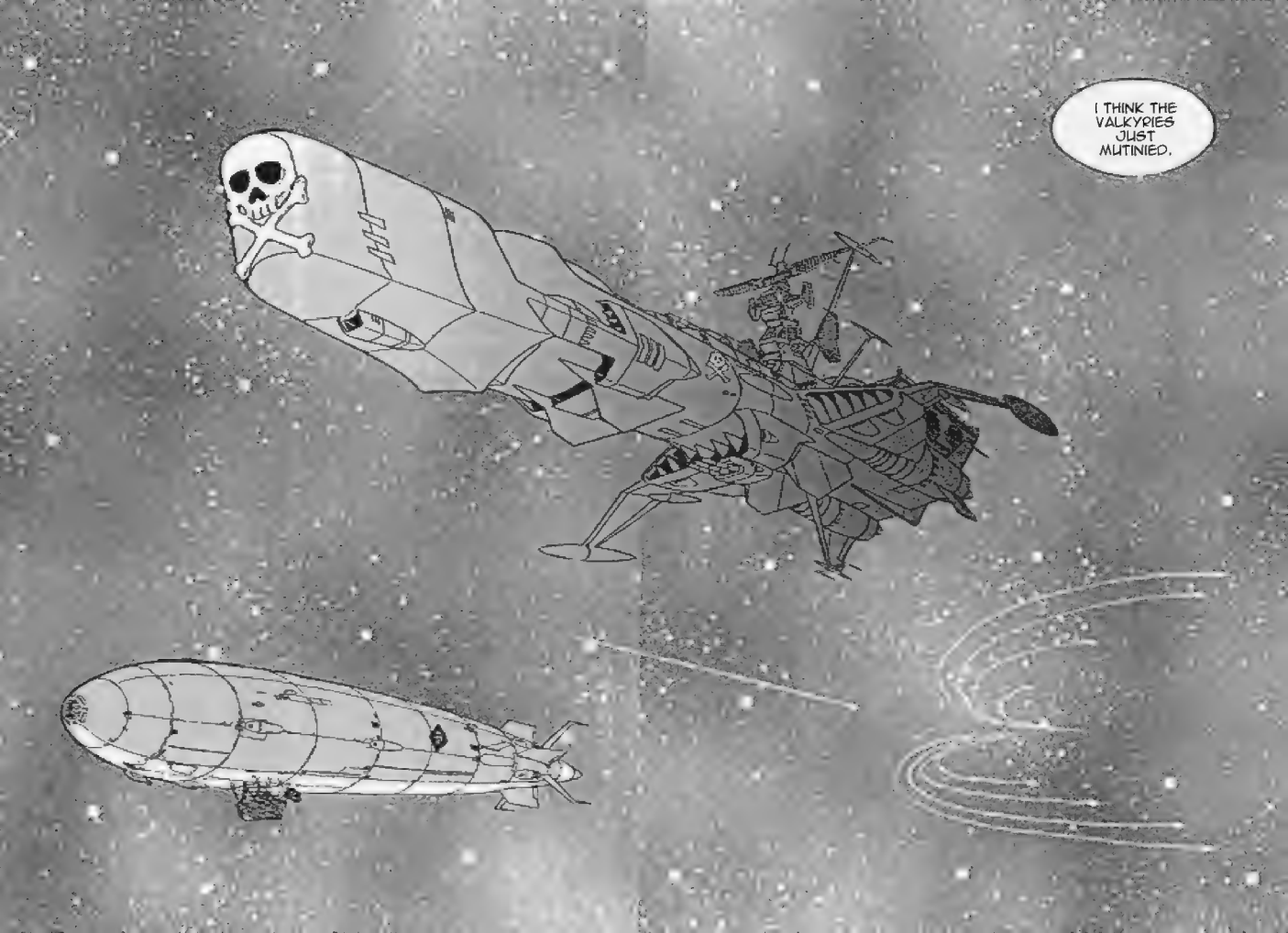
PREPARE TO JOIN THE REST OF YOUR ANCESTORS, YOU PILE OF JUNK!
YES ... I HAVE SEEN YOUR FACE AND HEARD YOUR WORDS, OLD ONE.

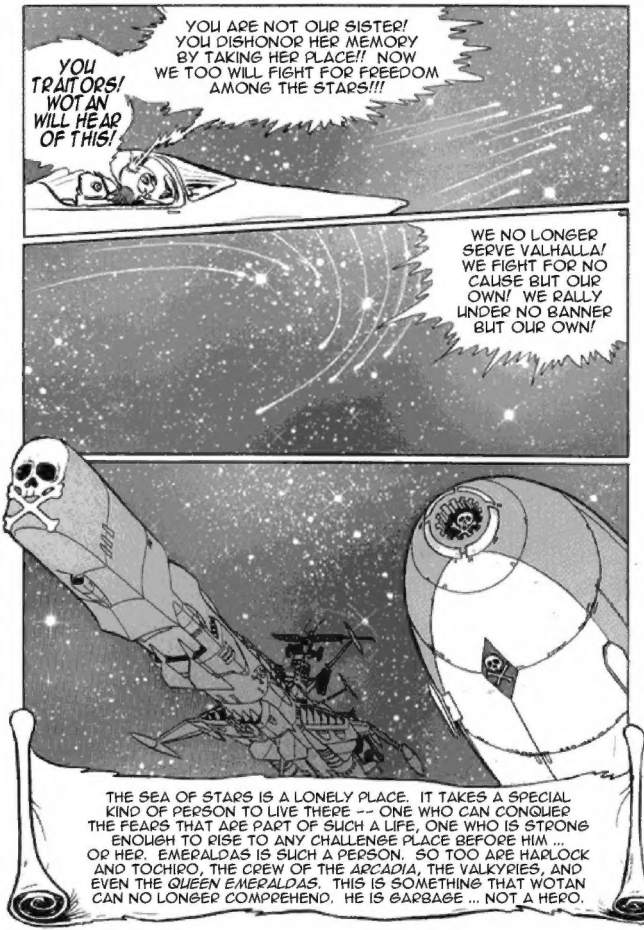

OUR PARLEY IS AT AN END!!!




WE WERE BOTH OF ONE MIND ON THIS MATTER, MISTRESS.
THANK YOU FOR NOT KILLING HER DURING HER VISIT. SHE DOESN'T DESERVE TO STAIN YOUR DECKS WITH HER BLOOD.
NONE CAN SEPARATE US, WE ETERNAL VOYAGERS!
I AM THE QUEEN EMERALDAS. I WILL SERVE YOU FOR WHOM I WAS MADE UNTIL THE END OF TIME.
I WILL NEVER FORGET THE TEARS YOU SHED FOR THEM ...
I REMEMBER WHEN I FINALLY SHARED WITH YOU THE FATE OF MY PEOPLE, AND HOW YOU WEPT ...
NOW YOU ARE ALL THAT I HAVE, AND I WILL TAKE CARE OF YOU ....
YES ....

AND HERE COME THE VALKYRIES. FOR WHAT, I WONDER?
LOOKS LIKE THEY FINISHED THEIR LITTLE CHAT.
KREMHILD! WE WILL NOT FIGHT FOR YOU! WE WILL NOT FIGHT WITH YOU!
GET BACK HERE!!!


I THINK THE VALKYRIES JUST MUTINIED.


YOU ARE NOT OUR SISTER! YOU DISHONOR HER MEMORY BY TAKING HER PLACE!! NOW WE TOO WILL FIGHT FOR FREEDOM AMONG THE STARS!!!
YOU TRAITORS! WOTAN WILL HEAR OF THIS!
WE NO LONGER SERVE VALHALLA! WE FIGHT FOR NO CAUSE BUT OUR OWN! WE RALLY UNDER NO BANNER BUT OUR OWN!
THE SEA OF STARS IS A LONELY PLACE. IT TAKES A SPECIAL KIND OF PERSON TO LIVE THERE -- ONE WHO CAN CONQUER THE FEARS THAT ARE PART OF SUCH A LIFE, ONE WHO IS STRONG ENOUGH TO RISE TO ANY CHALLENGE PLACE BEFORE HIM ... OR HER. EMERALDAS IS SUCH A PERSON. SO TOO ARE HARLOCK AND TOCHIRO, THE CREW OF THE *ARCADIA*, THE VALKYRIES, AND EVEN THE *QUEEN EMERALDAS*. THIS IS SOMETHING THAT WOTAN CAN NO LONGER COMPREHEND. HE IS BARBAGE ... NOT A HERO.

Götterdämmerung

Der Ring des Nieblungen: Götterdämmerung was published as an Internet comic on the old Shinchosa Publishing website, in both Japanese and English versions, from 07/1999 to 03/2001. The series was never finished, and thus has not been commercially published as of this date (2012).

This special English language version was adapted and reformatted by Richard Mandel from the original Shinchosa web site postings.

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